
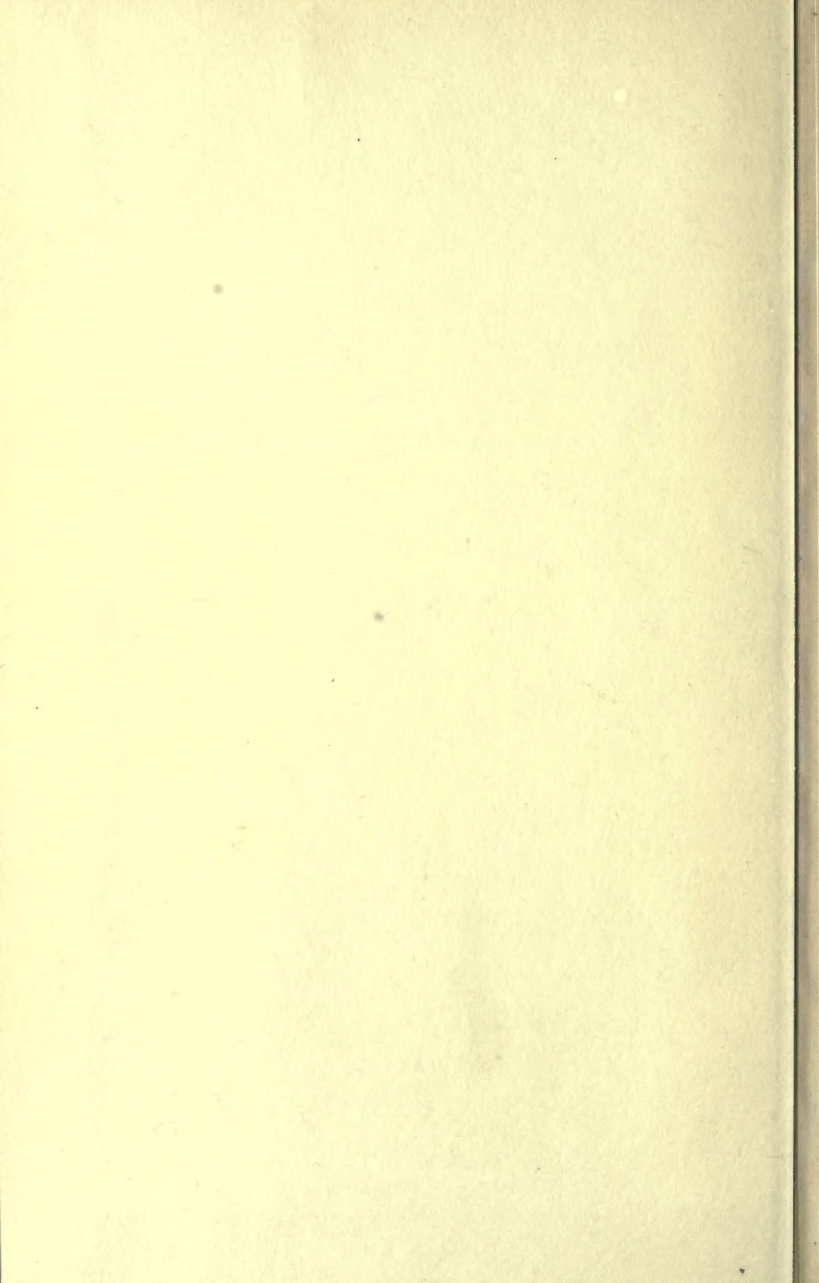


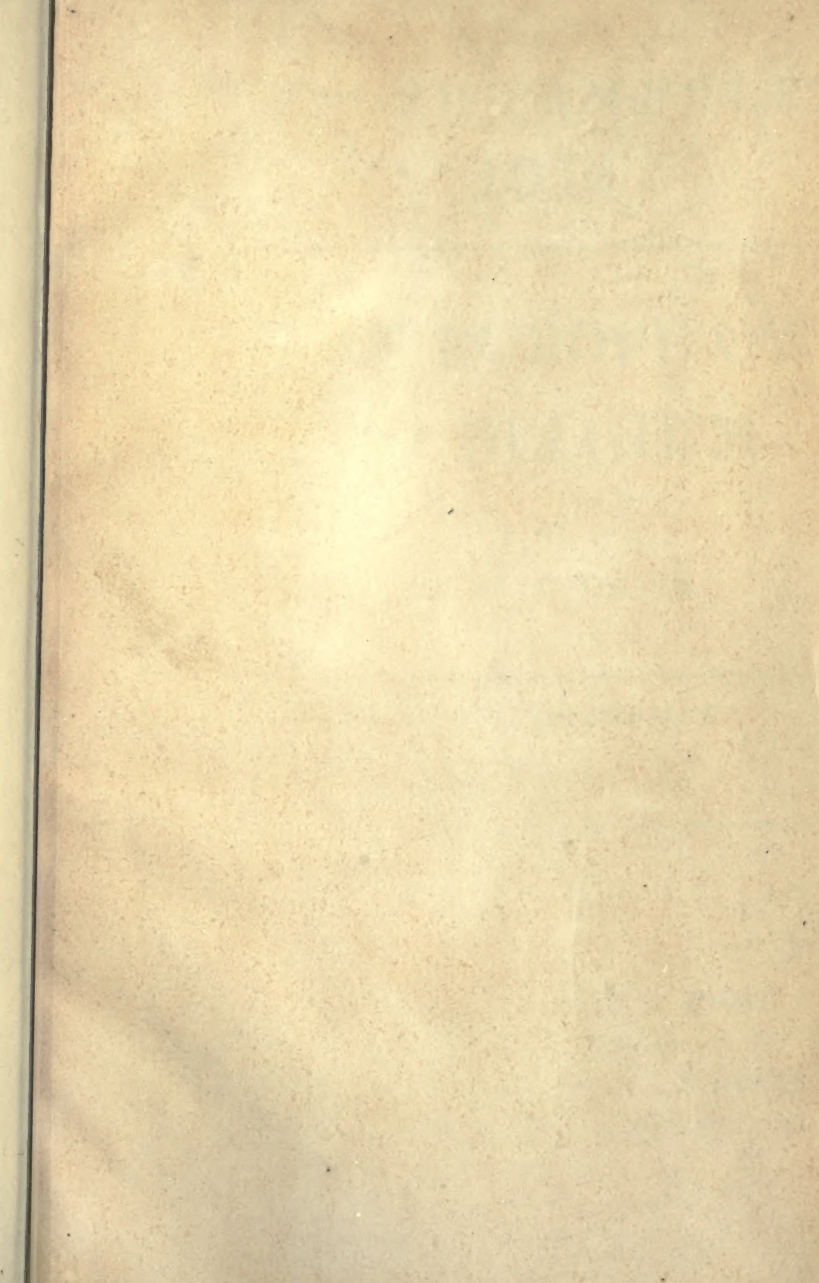
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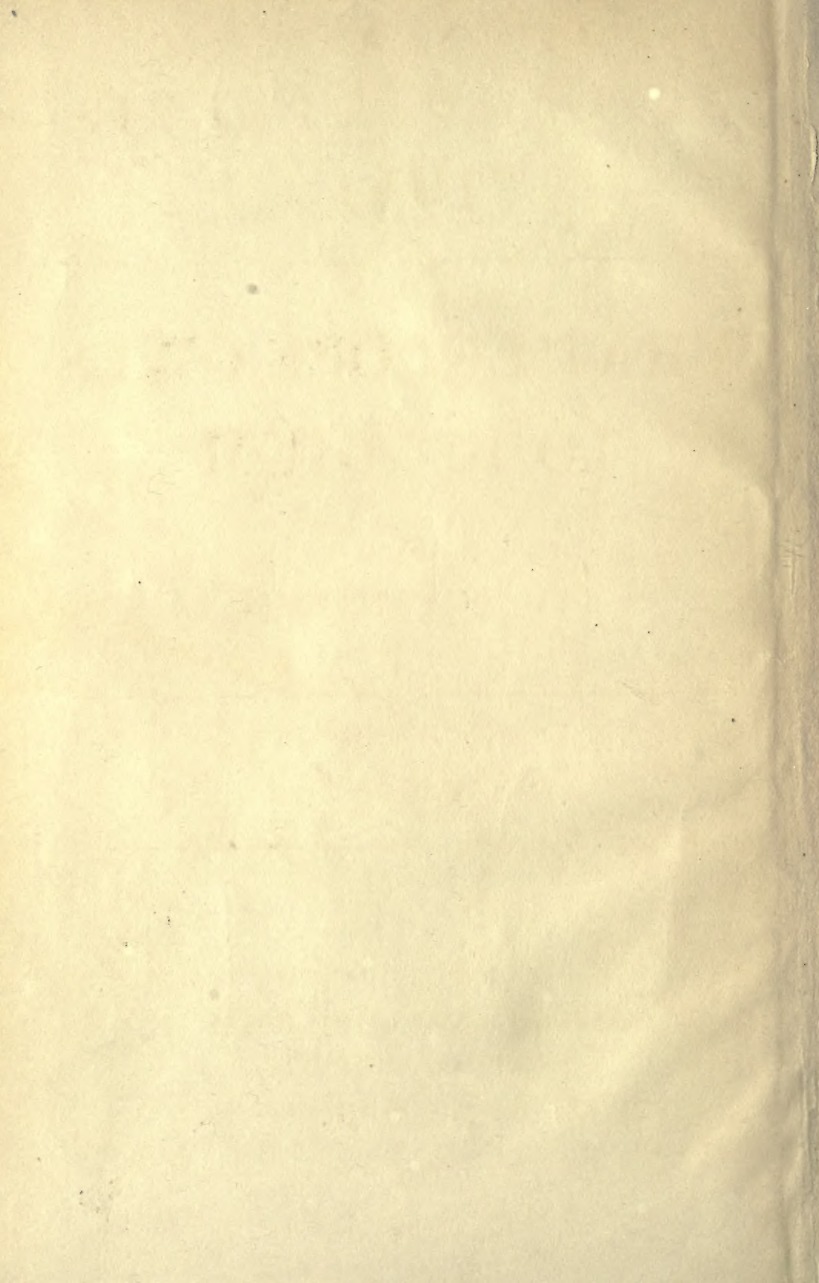
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WHAT EUROPE OWES
TO BELGIUM

BY

H. W. C. DAVIS

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WHAT EUROPE OWES TO BELGIUM¹

JUST over a hundred years ago, at the end of 1813, the allied armies of Austria, Prussia, Russia, and Great Britain were closing in upon France to dethrone Napoleon. One of the successes which were gained by the Prussians on the road to France was the expulsion from Belgium of the French, who had held the country since 1795. For eighteen years Belgium had been treated as an integral part of France ; in fact it had been organized as nine French departments. A minor problem which had to be settled after Napoleon's deposition was the future ownership of this country ; the Congress of Vienna handed it over to the kingdom of the Netherlands. No one imagined at the time that the Belgian people might object to this arrangement. Indeed, it was supposed that they would welcome union with the Dutch. For the State so formed would certainly be powerful enough for self-defence—whereas Belgium had been singularly defenceless in the past—and further, it was certain to become exceedingly prosperous, because it would control the lower part of the Rhine and the Meuse valleys, and would naturally be the main outlet for the foreign trade of Western Germany. But it would be a mistake to suppose that the Great Powers paid much attention to Belgian susceptibilities. What they desired, in their own interest, not in that of the Belgians or the Dutch, was to create a kingdom which would serve as

¹ A lecture delivered at Birmingham to the Workers' Educational Association on November 25, 1914.

a buffer between France and Germany, and which would be strong enough to keep Antwerp and Amsterdam from falling into the hands of a first-class State, such as France or Prussia. And in justice to the Great Powers it must be said that no one of them got any direct advantage from the union of the Dutch and the Belgians. Austria, who ranked as the second of the Great Powers—though she would not have admitted that she was only the second—gave up a good deal by assenting to the union. Legally she had the best claim to Belgium, which had belonged to her, under the name of the Austrian Netherlands, for eighty-two years before the French conquest. Austria had acquired her right, by the consent of the Great Powers, at the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713.

But though the treatment of Belgium in 1815 was not conspicuously selfish—the interests of Belgium were only subordinated to the general interests of Europe—the Great Powers showed a blindness to the lessons of past history which is certainly surprising.

They might be excused for supposing that the Belgians did not greatly desire independence. It is true the Belgians had disliked the rule of the Jacobins and of Napoleon; they had fought against Napoleon at Waterloo. Before that they had rebelled against Austrian rule, and had proclaimed themselves a republic (1789). But in each case they had risen simply to defend the ancient laws and privileges of their provinces and cities; and past experience seemed to show that they had no objection to a foreign ruler who allowed them to manage their local affairs in their own way. Before they came under Austria they had been ruled by the Spanish Hapsburgs for two hundred years; and before that by a French dynasty, the Dukes of Burgundy. In the remote past the provinces of Belgium had been little feudal princi-

palties; Ghent and Mons and Louvain, Liège and Namur, had been the capital cities of counts and dukes who were practically independent. But there had never been a Belgian national State. The very name of Belgium was an invention of the antiquarians: in the time of Julius Caesar the Celtic tribes of the Netherlands were federated under the name of Belgæ. But the Belgium of modern history contains two distinct races; and though the Walloons in the southern provinces were and are Celts, the Flemings in the north are undeniably Teutons in physique, in language, and in manners.

All these facts seemed so many reasons to justify the action of the Congress of Vienna. But, on the other hand, it should have been clear that the Dutch were the last nationality with whom the Belgians would consent to amalgamate. In the sixteenth century, for just twelve years (1567-79), the two peoples had united to throw off what seemed to them the intolerable yoke of Spain. But, after twelve years of the alliance, the Belgians had decided that, great as were the wrongs which they had suffered from Spain, it was better to be ruled by Spain than to run the risk of being ruled by the Dutch. They found the Dutch too imperious; they felt that, to maintain the alliance, it would be necessary to give way to the Dutch on every point of difference. And the points of difference were serious. The Dutch were Protestants, while the larger half of Belgium has always been devoted to the old faith. The Dutch were democratic and radical in politics, while the Belgians were strongly conservative and inclined to aristocratic government. The Dutch were a commercial race, who made no secret of their jealousy for the prosperous Belgian trading towns. Finally, the

Dutch were a seafaring race, inclined to risk everything for the sake of colonies and a carrying trade; but the Belgians were a sedentary folk, given over to agriculture and industrialism, with no interest at all in sea-power.

Such had been the causes of difference in 1579; and substantially the same causes produced civil war in the kingdom of the United Netherlands only fifteen years after it had been created. The population of Holland was considerably smaller than that of Belgium; but the king was a Dutchman; the Dutch usually contrived to make a majority in the national parliament; and the ministers of the crown were chosen by the king from his own countrymen. Both the bad and the good measures of this Government were displeasing to the Belgians; they were indignant at its attempts to make Dutch the official language, and also at its adoption of a policy of complete religious tolerance. They found that the Dutch system of taxation was so contrived as to bear hardly on the Belgian provinces; and they grumbled because their clergy were compelled to go through a course of higher education.

Civil war broke out in 1830; the Belgians were badly beaten by the Dutch, but saved from subjugation through the interference of France and England. The Great Powers decided to set up an independent Belgian State (1831), and after eight years the Dutch consented to recognize this arrangement (Treaty of London, 1839). The Belgians were obliged to compensate the Dutch by ceding territory on the eastern frontier, which was and is inhabited by a Flemish population. That is how Maestricht comes to be a Dutch possession at the present day. But the Belgians may now console themselves by reflecting that the Dutch occupation of Maestricht has

been a most useful check upon the German invaders of Belgium in the present war.

The Great Powers, then, in 1839, made amends to Belgium for the injury which had been inflicted in 1815. But, in doing so, they raised again a question which they had hoped to settle for good and all at Vienna. Obviously the new kingdom of the Belgians was not strong enough to defend Antwerp against France or against Prussia. If left to themselves, the Belgians would in common prudence accept the protection of one of these two Powers, probably of France; and then would be revived the danger of a French naval base at Antwerp, which had driven England to war with France in 1793. So it was agreed to make Belgium a neutral State in perpetuity. This plan had already been adopted, in regard to Switzerland, at the Congress of Vienna. It conferred a great advantage on Belgium; for it made any invasion of her territory a breach of international law. But it also restrained her freedom of action. She could not go to war except in self-defence; nor might she make any treaty which was not obviously and entirely defensive. She could not even go to war to defend an ally; and this, in effect, meant that she would never be able to make an alliance upon equal terms. All the Powers who signed the Treaty of London were equally bound to protect her; but she could hardly make further provisions for her safety by private treaties. You will remember that the Germans, quite recently, have gone so far as to argue that, if Belgium has at any time in the past made arrangements with France or with England for her own defence, those arrangements amount to a breach of neutrality. The argument is not one which international lawyers would accept; but, as a matter of fact, it is very hard to

frame a treaty, or even an agreement of a less formal kind, between two nations in such a way that it cannot possibly be construed as offensive in its purpose.

Here, then, we come to the legal obligations by which Europe is bound to Belgium. The Great Powers, for their own security, insisted upon partially disarming Belgium. By way of compensation they promised to defend the independence of Belgium. They are bound to fulfil this obligation, and not only as a matter of their national honour—though it will be a bad day for Europe when nations cease to think that they are bound in honour to fulfil their pledges, or to think that their honour is worth no considerable sacrifices. They are bound by their plain interests. For if they betray such pledges, how can they hope to make firm friends in the future? If they desert the small States who trust in them, how can they expect loyal dealings from allies who are not afraid of them?

German writers and statesmen sometimes make light of international law, as though it consisted entirely of rules which had been made by weak States, such as Belgium and Switzerland, to tie the hands of their more powerful neighbours. One may freely admit that many text-books of international law have been written by lawyers who belong to the smaller nationalities; and it is true that some of these books lay down doctrines which have no claim to be regarded as law, though the weaker States hope that they may be so regarded. But there is a great deal of international law which is formally recognized as binding by all the civilized States of the world. For example, there are general rules relating to the rights and duties of neutral States in war-time. These are embodied in the Hague Convention of 1907, which was ratified by all the Powers.

Then there are the more special rights and obligations of particular Powers one to another, which are defined in the treaties concluded at various times between them—as, for instance, the treaties which France and Germany concluded with Great Britain in 1870, treaties by which these two States promised to respect the neutrality of Belgium. It is the general belief, not simply of theorists and philanthropists, but of the practical statesmen of the world, that if such conventions and treaties may be repudiated with impunity by any Power which, after signing them, finds them inconvenient, if diplomacy may decline to recognize any Right but that of the strong to take what they covet, then the inevitable result will be a frightful anarchy, a ceaseless warfare of all States against all. The race of armaments will become increasingly acute, the best energies of every nation will be perforce devoted to no other tasks but that of self-defence, and the end of this insane rivalry will be either the bankruptcy of all the rivals, or a world-wide despotism of one.

These are the issues at stake in the present war. The central fact of the situation is that, in attacking Belgium, the Germans have proclaimed their contempt for international law and for the ideals which have given birth to that law. The Germans have indeed attempted to prove that Belgium forfeited her rights of neutrality before they attacked her ; but these attempts have been singularly unsuccessful, for the simple reason that they had no foundation in fact. Only four days before attacking Belgium they assured the Belgian Government that they intended to respect Belgian neutrality ; and a few days after German troops had entered Belgium the German Chancellor told the Reichstag that the German Government had committed

a breach of international law, because 'necessity knows no law'. Unquestionably he was more prudent than those of his countrymen who deny that any nation is bound by its plighted word; but if promises can be repudiated at any moment on the unproved plea of necessity, international law is reduced to a sham. Englishmen felt, and felt rightly, when they heard of the German invasion of Belgium, that the German Empire is the deadliest peril which has menaced Europe since the downfall of Napoleon Bonaparte. Unless we defended Belgium, all European treaties might as well be torn up. We have a longer political experience than the German Empire; we know that neither we nor any other nation can exist without firm alliances and honourable understandings. And we have gone to war mainly for the purpose of convincing Germany that treaties and guarantees are something more than 'scraps of paper'.

What we have done for Belgium is no more than we should be bound, in honour and in interest, to do for any Power to which we had given such guarantees of whole-hearted and individual support. And one must confess with very genuine shame that our support has been far from adequate to the danger in which Belgium was involved. We have made great efforts, and we have every cause to be proud of the gallantry with which our soldiers are fighting on the flank of the Belgian army at the present moment. Our soldiers have done more than any foreign nation ever expected of them—more than we had any right to expect, however much we hoped of them. But, for all that, the Belgian army is to-day all but driven out of Belgium; some of the most renowned of Belgian cities are in ruins; at least half the Belgian people are either starving or dependent

upon foreign charity in foreign lands. We hope and believe that this calamitous state of things will soon be bettered. But we know only too well that we can never restore to the Belgians the best of their lost possessions—her fallen soldiers, and, still more pitiful, the martyrs of Termonde, of Dinant, of Louvain.

I hope we are not proud of the way in which we Allies have repaid our debt to Belgium. Do we realize, even now, what a debt we owe to her? When the war-cloud first appeared on the horizon, in 1913, the Belgians made a sacrifice to the idea of national independence which we have never made. Their Parliament decreed the principle of universal military service and provided the ways and means for doubling the Belgian Army. They are the most pacific, the most industrial of the Continental nations; but they were prepared to put for the future one-half of their able-bodied men into the field for national defence. The war broke upon them before the new regulations had produced anything like their full effect. But it is the simple truth that the resistance of the Belgians at Liège and before Brussels saved the situation for the Allies. The Germans entered Belgium on August 4. They had expected to march straight through Belgium to the French frontier. In fact they were prevented from reaching the frontier until the 23rd. No one knows the exact state of the French defences on that day; but we know this much, that on the left of the Allied armies, at the point where the Germans made their great effort to reach Paris by outflanking the Allies, the French Commander-in-Chief had staked everything on the power of the British troops to delay the German advance. As we know, Sir John French and his troops did what was expected, at the cost of incredible efforts and in spite of losses which

would have demoralized most armies. But if the Germans had reached Mons three days earlier, they would have found no British forces drawn across their road. Our troops reached Mons at the earliest date which had ever been expected ; but they only got into position on August 22, barely twenty-four hours before the Germans were upon them. But for the delay caused by the Belgian resistance, which was so fierce and so unexpected that it upset all the calculations of the enemy, it is hard to see how the Germans could have been kept out of Paris. The fall of Paris would not have ended the war ; but it would have prolonged the war—such is the expert opinion—perhaps by as much as two years. What two additional years of warfare on the present scale would have cost the Allies in human lives, one hardly dares to conjecture. But in money alone two years of war could not cost this country less than £700,000,000. Money is not the first or even the second consideration in a war like this. Yet, after all, money represents wealth, the material basis of civilization. Lacking wealth, we must forgo many of the goods of life which are absolutely essential to civilization, not to speak of comfort. Let us only try to imagine how we should be obliged to economize—as individuals and as a nation—to pay off £700,000,000. It would mean pinching and scraping, for at least a generation, on such items as our charities, our poor-relief, our hospitals, the education of our children. When we emerge from the present war we are likely to be pinched in any case. I hope we shall never forget how much worse the position might have been, if General Leman had not played the part of a hero at Liége, or if King Albert had consented to make his peace with the Germans while he was still at Brussels.

But, after all, the Belgians have not been fighting for our material advantage or their own. If they have allowed their own women and children to go hungry and ragged, they have not done so simply and solely that English women and children might still be well fed and warmly clothed. It is not for the safety of England or of France that thousands of the Belgian people have allowed themselves to be driven into exile. Belgium has made her unparalleled sacrifices for the sake of an ideal. While we are fighting to assert the rule of law, the Belgians are fighting for their rights as a nationality. Under German rule they would have been much better secured against aggression than they ever will be as an independent State; and it is highly probable that they would have been materially more prosperous. Antwerp might have become the maritime capital of the German Empire; at all events Belgian trade would have been protected and fostered by German armaments and German diplomacy. Belgium would probably have kept her own King and her own Parliament; she might have been admitted into the Empire on the same favourable terms as Saxony, or even as Bavaria. And the Belgian nation almost to a man have refused to consider these alluring prospects, as not worthy to be weighed for a moment against national honour and national freedom. The greatest debt which Europe owes to the Belgians is this: that, in an age which appeared to be wholly materialistic, in an age which has talked as though the highest end and object of government was to effect a right distribution of wealth, and as though a man's duty to his class or his party came before his duty to his nation, they have been ready to sacrifice all that they possess, and life itself, for the sake of their national freedom. A nation

of artisans and manufacturers, of merchants and of shopkeepers, of farmers and peasant proprietors, they have dared to assert the value of the ideal, and to fight for their ideal in the teeth of overwhelming odds. Whether they succeed or fail—and they will not fail until France and England and Russia are beaten and broken—they have at least given Europe a lesson and an example which Europe can never forget.

To think of Belgium as a national State had not occurred to many Englishmen before the present war. We knew that the old racial differences of Fleming and Walloon survived ; and that these two races, approximately equal in numbers, were acutely divided on political and on religious questions. We knew also that conflicts between Labour and Capital had been particularly virulent in Belgium up to the close of the nineteenth century ; and that Belgian socialists were at all events theoretically cosmopolitan in their outlook. We remembered the Belgian War of Independence in 1830–3 ; but we had the impression that the Fleming, and the Walloon, had been drawn together by no stronger ties than those of a common resentment against Dutch misrule. Some of us admired the great Belgian writers, Maeterlinck and Verhaeren ; a few of us were aware of the existence of a Belgian school of sculptors. Hardly any one realized that these writers and artists represented a national sentiment of considerable strength. We are wiser now. We have realized that a coherent nation may be formed out of different races ; that national patriotism may grow up in the midst of political and social controversies ; and that, even in the modern world, the men of the counting-house and of the factory may find the ultimate rule of their lives in the dreams of the study or the studio.

After all, though the Belgian nationality is a plant of recent growth, it is deeply rooted in the soil of Belgium. The Belgians are to-day the same people that they have been for centuries ; they have only changed since 1839 to this extent, that they have become more fully conscious of their individuality as a people, prouder of the great traditions by which they are united, more alive to the advantages of every kind which result from the union and the independence of the Belgian provinces. But the essential characteristics and aptitudes of the Belgians, the qualities which entitle them to an honourable place in the commonwealth of nations—these can be detected even in the remote past when the name of Belgium was unknown, even as a geographical expression, and when the soil of Belgium was divided between half a dozen feudal principalities. Then, as now, the Belgian, whether he was by race a Walloon or a Fleming, was, remarkable, first for his untiring, almost heroic industry, secondly for a fervid idealism which coloured his religion and his art and often found expression in the conduct of his life. By virtue of these qualities the Belgian people have made, in the course of the past fifteen hundred years, a very substantial contribution both to the economic development of Europe and to its higher civilization. The mediaeval history of Belgium brings home to us the antiquity and the far-reaching extent of the debt which Europe owes the Belgian nation of to-day. I should like to give some illustrations, not because the Belgians of to-day have any need to rely upon the merits of their ancestors for our respect, but because it is a pure pleasure to dwell on such a record of past services.

Do we realize, in the first place, how completely the marvellous edifice of European wealth and civilization

is founded upon the labours and the economies of the forgotten pioneers and squatters who, from prehistoric times down to the very end of the Middle Ages, were slowly manufacturing habitable and cultivable land out of tangled forests, out of muddy swamps, out of desert moors and wastes? Every square yard of soil which we employ to-day in Europe owes some of its value to these early agriculturists. And there is no country in Europe where this work was carried on with more zeal or under more difficult conditions than in the Belgian Netherlands. In the fourth century after Christ the northern part of this country, the plains of Flanders and of North Brabant, was composed of heaths and marshes and sand-dunes. By the fifteenth century this wilderness had become a land of populous cities, surrounded by a dense agricultural population. How it had been reclaimed you may see from the case of the Yser river basin, which the Belgian army is defending. The rich meadows, which the Belgians have flooded by cutting the sea-dykes, were reclaimed from the sea in the fourteenth century. The Yser dykes were almost the last of the great artificial works by which Flanders became prosperous. It is no wonder that Flemish peasants were in demand all over Europe when there was land to be reclaimed. Three districts in Germany—Schleswig-Holstein, the Alt-Mark of Brandenburg, and Silesia—are partly indebted to the Flemings for their present prosperity. But it is needless to insist that, irrespective of such migrations—and at one time they were very considerable—the agricultural development of Flanders inevitably benefited all the numerous states with which her population traded from the earliest days of Flemish history.

To-day, however, all European countries are or aspire

to be industrial communities ; and they are impelled towards industrialism by the fact that their territories are too small for their population, if that population remains rooted to the soil and persists in an agricultural mode of life. Industrialism, like most great inventions of the past, seems to us now a very obvious way of maintaining a dense population. But the plan of producing wholly for the market, of sinking large stocks of capital in manufacturing enterprise, of searching out foreign markets and of clearing the road for foreign trade by means of commercial treaties—this was not rapidly or easily discovered. It was found out simultaneously by two European peoples, by the Italians and by the Flemings. But the Flemings made their first experiments in capitalistic industry under circumstances which were relatively unfavourable ; and these experiments were the more valuable to Europe because they were admired and copied by those Northern nations—the English, the French, and the Germans—with whom lay the future of European industry. The Flemings discovered that their soil was particularly suited to sheep-breeding. They turned to the textile industries as a means of utilizing the fleeces of their sheep. Then they found that their cloth was in request all over Europe ; and their weavers migrated from the open country into towns, to devote themselves entirely to cloth-making. Lastly, there grew up an aristocracy of merchants who became organizers of the industry, who imported wool from abroad to supplement the home-supply, who bought the finished cloth for export, who arranged for its transport, and who travelled far and wide in search of customers. Such was the trade which gave to the Flemish cities—particularly to Ghent and Ypres and Bruges—their marvellous pros-

perity in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. These cities were an unforgettable object-lesson to the statesmen of other nations.

But it was not their wealth alone which made the Flemish cities admirable. In the golden age of their development they were more than municipalities; they were states in miniature. Ghent and Bruges and Ypres ruled over considerable territories outside their walls. United they were strong enough to dictate terms to their lord, the Count of Flanders; and on one memorable field, at Courtrai in 1302, they gave a sound beating to the army of their overlord the King of France. How they were able to do it has been much discussed. Some say that they proved the superiority of the foot-soldier to the cavalryman; others that they owed the victory to the ditches which crossed the battle-field and made it impossible for the French knights to charge. The French themselves had no explanation to give; they could not understand it. One prefers to think that the Flemish burghers won because they had in them the temper which Oliver Cromwell declared—and he was no mean judge of such matters—to be the making of an efficient soldier. ‘I had rather have a plain russet-coated man that knows what he fights for, and loves what he knows, than that which you call a gentleman and is nothing else.’ The Flemings knew what they fought for; the independence of their native province, and still more the right to govern their native cities as they pleased, without the interference of either Count or King. Courtrai was won by an army of artisans and small employers; they fought to destroy the power of the narrow oligarchic coterie which had usurped the government of the towns; and they fought the King of France because he was on the side of their oppressors

The object, in fact, was to set up industrial democracies. It was only achieved in part and for a short time ; the Flemings were hard hit by the French at Cassel in 1328, and at Roosebecque in 1382. The second of these battles was the death-blow to Flemish liberties ; Flanders became the property of a French prince, and the nucleus of that powerful Burgundian State which, under the autocratic rule of Charles the Rash (1465-77), formed a menace to both France and Germany.

The catastrophe of 1382 destroyed Flemish independence for the next three centuries and a half. It did not destroy material prosperity, or prevent Flanders and the other Flemish province of North Brabant, which shared the same servitude, from remaining glorious as homes of art and culture. It definitely linked the fortunes of the Flemings to those of their Walloon neighbours in Hainault, in Namur, and in the Ardennes ; and to that extent the Burgundian supremacy prepared the way for the founders of the Belgian nation. But for the time being it destroyed something more valuable than it created. It destroyed the democratic ideals of the Flemish cities.

We must not exaggerate the results which this democratic movement had achieved. It was proving a failure some time before the French conquest ; for its leaders had attempted the impossible, and they were not consistently faithful to their own ideals. After the battle of Courtrai the craft-gilds of the cities got political power into their own hands ; they ousted the capitalist from the town-councils and the magistracies. But the craft-gilds did not really desire liberty and equal opportunities for all. Under their rule the weaving cities relentlessly stamped out the weaving trade in every village within reach. The members of the craft-

gilds, who were mostly employers on a small scale, made it illegal for those whom they employed to organize. And they discovered very soon that the rich merchants, although robbed of political power, were still masters of the economic situation. It was only through the merchants that the craftsman could obtain his raw materials or dispose of his finished product. Democracy had failed to produce the material advantages which were expected from it ; and it fell out of favour when the first flush of enthusiasm for the new political creed had passed away. Democracy was indeed impracticable in a society of which the structure was essentially capitalist and aristocratic. Ghent and Bruges were no more fitted to be democracies than was the Republic of Venice, which rose to greatness and decayed contemporaneously with them. None the less is honour due to the Flemish burghers for a bold political experiment, which was all the more honourable to them because it anticipated by some centuries the natural course of social evolution. At all events they share with the Swiss cantons the credit for reviving the idea of political freedom when it was in danger of dying altogether. From the battles of Courtrai and Morgarten we may date the birth of the Third Estate as a factor in European politics.

This democratic movement of the fourteenth century illustrates one side, the political side, of Flemish idealism. It was a movement which was coloured and indeed disfigured by an intensely localized patriotism, which understood by freedom little more than the assertion of municipal independence, which made the citizen of Bruges or Ghent even more anxious to humble other Flemish cities than to reform his own. This local patriotism it was which made the Belgian Netherlands so defenceless against French and Austrian and Spanish

despotism. But such as it was, it gave some dignity and meaning to Belgian history in the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries. The Flemish provinces were always prepared to take up arms in defence of local liberties. And we have seen of late the proof that, when the provinces were united under a government of their own choosing, this local patriotism was rapidly transmuted into a nobler sentiment of nationalism.

But there are other aspects of Flemish idealism which are better known, and to which Europe is more profoundly indebted. It is almost a commonplace with German writers on political science that the small states of the modern world are unlikely to do much for artistic or intellectual progress. It is a strange view to be held by the countrymen of Schiller and of Goethe. It is contradicted more emphatically by the history of Belgium than by that of Weimar. Weimar was for a single generation the focus of a great literary movement. The Flemings and the Walloons have been not once but several times conspicuous as the pioneers of religious revivals and of new artistic forms.

No doubt there was much spiritual indolence among the patriciates of the Flemish cities, these 'rich men, furnished with ability, living peaceably in their habitations', who were the patrons of Rubens and of Teniers, who lavished their money upon sumptuous mansions, on costly furniture and tapestries, who often spent more on their town-halls than their churches. But there was another temperament, the very antithesis of this complacent satisfaction in the best of all possible worlds, which meets us at every stage of Flemish history; a mystical temperament, which rebelled against the commonplace and the worship of material splendour, which found satisfaction in painful enterprises, in seclusion

and self-mortification, or in visions of the good and the beautiful. The Flemings and the Walloons were intimately associated with every religious revival of the Middle Ages ; and nowhere did the urban classes give a more consistent or generous support to the founders of new religious houses. The *béguinage* for male or female recluses was a distinctive feature of the smallest Flemish towns ; these communities were founded by burghers for men and women of their own class. If any one is inclined to make light of such communities, and of the religion which they fostered, he should read the *Imitatio Christi* attributed to Thomas à Kempis. It was produced in a Dutch community, but it expresses faithfully the best religious thought of the Belgian Netherlands. Besides the recluses, we must remember the popular preachers, and the crusaders, of whom both the Flemish and the Walloon provinces were prolific. A Walloon, Godfrey of Bouillon, was the first Latin king of Jerusalem. One count of Flanders (Baldwin IX) became the first ruler of the Latin Empire of Constantinople ; another, Thierry of Alsace, made four several expeditions to the Holy Land. In the crusading movement, from its commencement almost to its close, the Flemings and the Walloons played a part which was out of all proportion to their numbers or their political importance.

For the fifteenth century, the age of the Renaissance, we have another sort of witnesses to attest the vitality of Flemish faith. The early Flemish school of painting, which reached the height of perfection in the works of the Van Eycks and of Hans Memling, is remarkable not only for rich colouring and the minute representation of detail, but still more for its profoundly religious spirit. These painters, we feel, delight in the forms and colours of the world around them ; but they are chiefly preoccu-

ped with the problem how to make of the seen world a symbol which shall foreshadow and suggest the unseen. In Flanders and Brabant, as in Italy, the native schools of art and of religious thought were blighted during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries first by Spanish and afterwards by Austrian rule. Louvain and Antwerp became the head-quarters of an official Catholic propaganda which had its virtues, no doubt, but was Spanish, or Austrian or Italian, never Flemish in its character. Flemish art became denationalized in the same manner; a Rubens or a Vandyck worked for patrons of many nationalities and developed a cosmopolitan manner which, though certainly magnificent, had little or no relation to the Flemish mind. But, since 1870, in the national kingdom of Belgium, there has been a genuine revival of Flemish mysticism both in art and literature. In the writings of Maeterlinck, in the symbolic sculptors of the young Belgian school, we see the spirit of the *béguinage* and the spirit of Van Eyck, adapted indeed to modern forms of thought and expression, but substantially unchanged. Local traditions and racial characteristics have a truly astonishing power of persistence; and it would be a grave error to suppose that the modern Belgians are connected with their ancestors of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries solely in the imagination of the poet or the antiquarian. The traditions, in particular, of the glorious past of the Netherlands have entered into the very life-blood of the Belgians. The Greeks and the Italians have shown us in the past how such traditions may lift up the hearts of a whole people, and nerve them for incredible renunciations. The Belgians are teaching us the same lesson by their example at the present day.

Europe owes it to Belgium, and owes it to herself, that such traditions, and the nation whom they have inspired, should not be allowed to become a memory of the past. The Belgians deserved well of Europe in the Middle Ages; but the Belgians of to-day have deserved still better. They have added another chapter to the long history of the brave deeds of small nations; such deeds are the greatest heritage that any men can leave to the future. It is more than two thousand years since three hundred Spartans faced and fought the innumerable armies of the Persians, and died to a man, that they might gain time for their countrymen behind them to prepare defences; more than two thousand years since the whole people of the Athenians took ship and sailed from Athens, saying that the barbarian might take away their homes, but should not take away their freedom. Those actions are as fresh in the minds of men as if they had happened yesterday. The Spartans in the pass of Thermopylae, the Athenians in their ships at Salamis, have been for seventy generations the symbols of heroic patriotism. But I think that future generations, without forgetting the Spartans or the Athenians, will quote the Belgians as a proof that the old standards of heroism and of patriotism have not altogether been forgotten in the modern world. We, who have seen this war, when we hear the name of patriot in the future, shall always think of the little war-worn Belgian army on the Yser; a ragged army, pinched with cold and drenched with rain, short of guns, short of ammunition, short of food; an army which has been pushed back by the brute weight of men and metal, till it stands on the very frontier of Belgium and has been obliged to let in the sea over the last few miles of Belgian territory that it controls; but an army

which is still unconquered and, as we firmly hope, unconquerable. Is there in the world at this moment another industrial democracy which would be able to endure this ordeal? We may think so, but we must hope with all our hearts that the belief will never be put to the hard test of facts. So far we have owed much, too much to Belgium. I doubt we shall never pay that debt in full; it is unpayable. And so it is with mingled shame and sympathy that we wish God-speed to King Albert and his brave Belgians on the Yser.



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POLAND, PRUSSIA
AND CULTURE

BY

LUDWIK EHRLICH

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POLAND, PRUSSIA AND CULTURE

It is hardly necessary at the present moment to offer apologies for a pamphlet on the above subject. The war which is now going on has been proclaimed to be a struggle to free small nationalities from oppression; and Poland, in the early stages of the conflict, was singled out as one of those which were to be emancipated. A short account, therefore, of the life of this people may not be without interest for English and American readers; and a member of a nation hitherto oppressed and outraged may be permitted to remind the world of some part of her sufferings, as well as to give a few typical features of her present life.¹ The case for Poland need not be urged afresh. But the efforts which the Prussians are everywhere making to represent themselves as the champions of culture justify an account of the barbarities which they commit daily, and which are characteristic of their methods alike in peace and in war.

Prussia is the worst enemy of Poland. The best proof of that fact is to be seen in the present German character of the country east and north of Berlin, all of which was formerly Slavonic. For a long time past German colonizers have come into Russian Poland as a kind of advance guard of the *Drang nach Osten*. I should like

¹ The writer feels bound to acknowledge his debt of gratitude to his friends Mr. C. K. Allen and Mr. T. B. Kittredge for their assistance kindly given him by revising this pamphlet.

to remark here, that I am not going to treat of the complicated problems arising out of the relations between Poland and Russia : recriminations would be useless at this stage, and there is ample room for hope. But while in that direction we are met by an open problem, the question as to the relations between Prussia and Poland is definitely settled. A victorious Prussia would indeed mean a constant bar to the development of Poland, further oppression for Prussian Poland, and the Germanization of a large part of Russian Poland. Also let it be remembered, that whatever injustices Russia has committed against Poland have been universally known and condemned ; the deeds of Russian bureaucracy were even attributed to Russian society, despite the latter's higher ideals ; while Prussia, though guilty of more serious wrongs, has succeeded in making the world believe in her culture. That is why one would like to take an early opportunity of stating some hard facts about her vaunted humanity.

Comparatively few people in England are acquainted with the facts which I propose to discuss. I shall try, as one of a nation of over twenty millions, to state facts which I believe are matters of common knowledge to every member of that nation. At the same time, I wish to make it clear that I am speaking for nobody but myself, and that what I intend to say concerns either matters well known to everybody intimate with Polish affairs or personal impressions of conditions which each reader can verify for himself.

The inquiry will be twofold :

(1) What do the Poles stand for in their national culture ?

(2) What is the meaning, in point of culture, of the German hostility to the Poles ?

What do the Poles represent in civilization? Naturally it is difficult for a member of the nation in question to answer such a question. He may be accused of partiality and exaggeration, or he may overlook something of importance. The life of the Polish nation is too complex to admit of any short answer being given to the question I have proposed. I shall therefore confine my attention to one or two characteristic features of national development. The absence in England of reference-books with detailed statistics makes it difficult to give more than general indications.

First of all, in estimating the part played by Poland in the progress of civilization, one must remember her unfortunate position. A member of any nation with political independence can always work with one single purpose. In business, scholastic work, military service, he is always serving not only his own interest but his nation. Not so a Pole. Whatever new work he may take up, he must always remember that it is for him also to defend his national heritage against his enemies. Those enemies are armed; he is not. They control legislative bodies; he must obey their orders, or be treated as a revolutionary. They are powerful, and can make friends; he has nothing but what God has given him and what he can win for himself. At the very best, he is graciously allowed to enjoy a few of those rights which everywhere else are considered the birthright of man; but usually even that privilege is denied him. To understand Polish psychology, one must realize that two attitudes may be taken up in regard to Polish conditions. One is that of the cold chronicler, who simply records facts: to him, the Prussian Expropriation Law, the sufferings of children, the punishment of patriots, are merely items in a series of statutes, in

a treatise on pedagogy, in criminal statistics. But there is another and a more human point of view. You must yourself be able to feel deeply if you wish to understand what is felt, for instance, by an Austrian Pole, when he hears of the wrongs suffered by his compatriots in Prussian Poland. Unless you accept the evidence of those who have observed this people, unless you have been in Polish patriotic meetings, unless you have heard a national song sung secretly, with tears in the eyes—it is not easy to understand what the Polish spirit really means. And Poland of to-day is not a country of wealth and power which can reward her devoted sons with highly-paid positions and orders and titles. The Pole considers himself the son of a poor mother, whom he sees bound hand and foot, and whom he earnestly desires to make free and happy.

I should like to dispel at once a very common delusion, which arises from the oft-repeated calumnies of Poland's enemies. Polish patriots have often been represented as the sons or friends of a corrupt aristocracy, who desire a re-established Poland for their own selfish purposes. That view shows only a profound ignorance or a wilful misrepresentation of the life of the people. Polish patriotism is in the fullest sense a popular sentiment. Have the detractors forgotten that in the interval between the second and third partitions (1793–5) it was the peasants who took up—I was going to say arms, but alas! they had no arms: they took their scythes and turned them into swords—peasants, I repeat, who went into the field in thousands to face the enemy? Their leader was the famous Tadeusz Kosciuszko (*pron.* Kostewshko). It is said that the populations of boroughs were neglected or oppressed: was it not the heroic population of Warsaw, was it not a humble shoemaker (Kilinski) who

most nobly defended Polish liberty? Much, very much, may be said against some of Poland's former rulers; and many of her nobles have been far from guiltless. But does Poland stand alone in this respect? Was not the 'Holy Roman Empire of the German nation' torn by the struggles of petty princes and counts and barons? What of the Rhine Federation of 1806? The Polish burghers and peasants, one may say without exaggeration, fully understood that it was their country, and not any privileged class of their nation, which they so passionately defended. I do not mean to underestimate the great part played by the nobility in Polish history. Their mistakes were common mistakes of their times. But they were, and they still are, on the whole, as patriotic as any section of the community, and from their ranks have come some of the greatest of Poland's sons.

Austria attempted to counteract the revolutions of the 'forties by stirring up a peasant war against the nobility. (The condition of the peasantry, be it remembered, depended on, and could only be reformed by, the Austrian Government itself.) The attempt resulted only in a few outrages sanctioned by the Governments' benevolent neutrality; while the town of Lwów (*pron.* Lvooff) did revolt—but against the Government! At the same time a movement was being carried on in all parts of Poland, mostly against the Governments' wishes, to democratize the country. In 1848 the Poles were hailed as the champions of liberty in Berlin: they played a prominent part in the Austrian Constituent Assembly, which was suspended after a short time and superseded by a system of rigorous absolutism.

In spite of repeated prosecutions, the movement to popularize patriotic ideas, as well as to spread education among the poorer classes, was never suppressed. Advan-

tage was taken of every possible opportunity to carry on the propaganda ; consider, for example, the development of schools in Galicia, where, to some extent at least, this function has of recent years been in the hands of Poles. We say to some extent ; for the expenses had to be approved, directly or indirectly, by the Government, and only a few sources of revenue were available. It must be remembered that, down to the 'sixties, the Austrian Government had done its best to crush Polish patriotism, and had denied the Poles any effective part in the administration of their own affairs ; the development of Galicia, therefore, must be considered as dating only from that time. Where, in any part of Poland, the Government attempted to repress Polish education, a system of 'illegal' teaching grew up. At the risk of imprisonment, Polish ladies would gather round them children of the poor, and do what in every other community would be considered not a crime but a work of charity—teach these children their own language and history. Coming home from their work, mothers would spend the evening in giving their children the cherished advantages they could not gain at school ; for there it was a foreign language and history, not their own, which was offered them. Where it was lawful or, at all events, possible, students and others from the so-called 'intellectual' or educated classes would devote their spare time and much of their meagre income to the cause of enlightening Polish peasants and workmen, and assisting them in the struggle for their daily bread. To go out into the country, to lecture on some subject of general interest, in particular on Polish history, is the pride of many Poles. The system, though best organized in Galicia, is to be found throughout Poland. In Galicia, the Society of Popular

Schools (known familiarly as the T.S.L.) has branches in thousands of villages, and numerous organizations in the larger towns. Where the work already done by the local school is adequate, the branch contents itself with imparting elementary general knowledge to the peasants, developing their social life (there are, for instance, many amateur performances of music and drama), and instructing them in subjects of everyday utility; there is usually a small library; the local subscription is at most 1s. 8d. a year. Where local education is not efficient, or where none exists, schools are organized. In towns, *mutatis mutandis*, similar work is done. A number of other organizations exist which aim at the moral and physical development of the Pole.

Much the same is to be said of the economic development of the people. The Polish peasant, as well as the burgher or landlord, has been taught to understand that his national existence is closely connected with his economic strength. He is economically weakest where he is politically strongest—as in Galicia. Every political concession has been bought at the price of bearing a heavy economic yoke, which was imposed on Galicia as far back as the eighteenth century. From that time onwards Galicia has been a hinterland, and even her liberation from German imposts was obstructed by the Austrian Government as much as possible. Where ‘iron war’ is being relentlessly waged on them, the Polish peasant and burgher adopt the only weapon which is left to them—that of economic organization: Polish industrial enterprise was carried on in Prussia against the will of the Government, which on the other hand lent all its assistance to German trade. Yet the Poles managed to augment their national wealth, much to the exasperation of German economists. No statute,

no *Landrat*, no police, were powerful enough to check this development. Law after law was passed, Pole after Pole was ill-treated, *Landrats* were constantly changed : but still the nation grew from strength to strength. And when the most drastic steps were taken by the authorities, the Poles replied by organizing a boycott of all German goods as well as of all Germans imported by the Government to aid in Germanizing the country.

One of the best evidences of the democratic character of Poland's economic development is the vigorous growth of co-operative societies. In all three parts of the country these societies have rapidly spread, and at present are conspicuously worthy of study and imitation. Whenever an opportunity presents itself of carrying on this movement by legal methods, they are extended in all directions, so that there is now a perfect network of societies out of which larger and larger units are gradually formed. The best known are the 'Farmers' Circles', which exist in almost every village.

The boycott, to which I have just referred, is used by the Poles as a defensive weapon against German aggression. Russian Poland has been for many years flooded with German colonists. Prussian Poland is, in fact, regarded by the Prussian Government as a kind of promised land for Germans instead of Poles. Since the Prussian Government began to increase its persecutions of the Poles—at the same time assisting Germans with every kind of encouragement—a boycott has been organized against German tradesmen in Prussian Poland, and against all German produce in Russian and Austrian Poland. The movement is taken up with unbounded enthusiasm by young and old alike. I have seen school-children going from shop to shop, asking for articles such as pens, paper, &c., and reporting to the Press or the

'boycott-organizations'¹ the names of traders who had offered German, or even 'suspected' goods. It must be remembered that the Poles can nowhere employ the weapon of tariffs; for instance, goods brought from Warsaw to Cracow are often subject to heavier duties than those coming from Berlin. Needless to say, the Germans used every possible ruse to circumvent the watchful boycotters, while they compelled the Prussian Poles to give a large measure of publicity to their business. Notwithstanding their efforts, the work was done thoroughly and well.

The political struggle for existence could do much to make life difficult for the Poles; but it did not entirely absorb the attention of the nation. It did not exclude a strong, though hampered, cultural life. It is hardly necessary to remind my readers of world-famous names like those of Mme. Curie-Sklodowska the scientist, Sienkiewicz the novelist, or Paderewski the musician. But I may be allowed to add that they are by no means accidents of national life and character. The work of culture is carried on unceasingly. The Germans, with their sixty millions, have more than twenty universities; the ten millions of German Austrians have five; the Poles, with over twenty millions, have—two! In these two, it is true, there is no branch of human knowledge which is not taught. Still, the numbers speak for themselves. There are many Polish scholars of great eminence—though unfortunately they are often taken for foreigners! It happens only too frequently that the results of Polish academic labour are appropriated by

¹ A body of this kind exists in Lwów under the name of 'Organization of Boycott of Goods coming from Prussia and the German Empire', and had, when I was last in that city, its own publication, called *Bojkot*.

the learned pretences of others. Hence the desire of many Poles to write in no language but their own ; hence, also, the fact that so few people in England are acquainted with the work of a scholar (to name only one) who should be well known to anybody who is interested in Polish or Slavonic legal history—I refer to Professor Balzer, of the University of Lwów. There are many others equally zealous, if not equally illustrious. To the excellent academic work which is being done much is contributed by the numerous learned societies and their publications. There is a special society devoted to the promotion of nearly every branch of knowledge. Here again the smallest actual result is achieved in Prussia, where every nerve is strained and every faculty engaged in defending what remains of national property. Where the pressure of material conditions is not so severe, intellectual work goes on without pause, the central control being vested in the Polish Academy, whose numerous publications may be found in more than one English library.

It must always be borne in mind that all this work is carried on with, at most, comparatively slight assistance from the Government. Generally it receives no assistance at all and has to contend with the greatest difficulties. It should be clearly understood who is chiefly responsible for this work. It may be interesting to note that the Polish learned community (whatever its varying political sympathies) is to a large extent of democratic origin.¹ The same is true of the students. Many of them, sons of poor farm-labourers, come up to

¹ There are, of course, many distinguished scholars of noble descent, e. g. Count Tarnowski, the President of the Academy ; the late Count Dzieduszycki ; Count Pininski ; Professor Starzynski, the late Rector of Lwów University, and others.

the university and work six or more hours a day just to earn their scanty livelihood. It is not uncommon to find among them men who even contrive to send a little money to support an aged mother or help to send a brother to school. The time left over from that which is spent in earning a living is devoted to university work, or even to work in some society which helps to provide education for the poor.¹ I have seen many examples of this kind in my own university. Of course, some attempt has been made to give assistance to those who have to struggle against such difficulties. 'Societies of fraternal help' have been organized, and are doing admirable work in the universities. 'University houses,' which provide cheap lodgings, have also been built. The principle of national self-help is applied wherever possible.

A characteristic and curious feature of Polish culture is the peasant-poets. They are not merely isolated cases; they are very popular—not least among their fellow peasants. One of their number, a member of the Reichsrat and the Galician Diet, some time ago by accident lost his seat in the Diet. The city of Lwów offered him a seat, and he was elected after a campaign lasting only a few days. The works of these poets are not treated as mere curiosities, but accepted as expressions of those feelings which are not only characteristic of the Polish mind but common to humanity at large. In this connexion mention should be made of the Polish patriotic songs. They form a group by themselves; there are hundreds of them, expressing those sentiments of hope and fear

¹ The poverty of most Polish students is incredible. An inquiry organized a few years ago by a personal friend of mine, Dr. Zylski, has revealed the most appalling conditions.

and love and sorrow which ever since the last quarter of the eighteenth century have filled the hearts of all true Poles. Though generally composed by obscure authors, they are known everywhere throughout the country. There is no great event in Polish history, no battle of the revolutions,¹ no famous case of persecution, which is not commemorated by its own song. From the period of the Napoleonic wars up to the present time, collections of these songs have been owned by many Poles, and the utmost persecution has not been able to make them surrender these treasured possessions.

In the quality and output of their literature the Poles may claim, I think, that they are not behind any other nation of the present day. There are so many writers in different branches of literary activity that it is difficult to give any accurate or even approximate account of their productions. Prus-Glowacki tells in a brilliant novel the story of a Polish peasant in Russian Poland who is beset by German colonists eager to snatch his land and ready to employ every means to ruin the heroic defender of his ancestral land. The poetess Mme. Konopnicka sings of village life, while her friend Mme. Orzeszkowa leads a vigorous attack on social superstitions. The poet of radicalism, Zeromski, places his hero amid the events which in Napoleonic times filled Poland with conflicting emotions, and pictures the development of his mind from early youth to mature manhood. Tetmajer, a son of the Polish highlands, sings their beauty and the life-story of their sons and daughters. Village life is faithfully described by Reymont ; Ujejski's illustration of Chopin's *Marche Funèbre* lends a new beauty to that famous work ; Asnyk, social reformer as

¹ There was a time when even German poets, like Lenau, sang of Polish patriotism,

well as singer of love-songs ; Mme. Zapolska, whose fascinating novels expose with a strong realism social vice and hypocrisy—these are only a few names taken at random from many.

What has been said may give some impression of Polish civilization—an impression which, I feel sure, does not err on the side of exaggeration. I have tried, except for one or two minor references, to confine myself to what has been done in the last decades of the nineteenth and first years of the twentieth centuries ; there are large fields of successful Polish activity, especially in the fine arts (e. g. in painting the works of Grottger, Siemiradzki, Matejko, and so many others) to which I have not referred. I have purposely refrained from going further back and from mentioning Poland's three greatest poets, as well as others of her famous sons and daughters. I hope that I have said enough to show that this nation is worthy of the assistance of other nations who stand for civilization and culture. There is surely no need to plead that she is entitled to *existence and independence* ; my intention is merely to show that her inward life has been so vigorous, in spite of all difficulties, that in helping her more powerful nations will be helping the cause of culture and humanity. Can the same be said of Prussia? That leads us to the question, What is the meaning, from the point of view of culture, of the struggle between Germans and Poles ?

There are three arguments which are generally put forward whenever the Germans, and more especially the Prussians, set themselves to subdue a smaller nation : they are—(1) The racial struggle ; (2) The defence of culture ; (3) Example. As to the racial struggle, it is usually carried on against Slavs, sometimes against Latins ;

but the struggle itself is not necessarily confined to those races, for Prussia has not hesitated to oppress Teutonic Danes. Moreover, until quite recently, the Prussian ruling classes would have repudiated any idea of relenting their persecution of the Poles 'lest Russia might be alienated'.¹ Frederick II and Frederick William II did not mind combining with Russia to carry out the partitions of Poland. But wherever possible the 'racial struggle' serves as an excuse and a catchword. Usually some person of weight and authority comes forward to urge upon the German world the necessity of carrying on the struggle. To mention only one example: it was no other than Theodor Mommsen who, seventeen years ago, considered it his duty to stir up Austrian Germans against the Slavs, the majority in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy being Slavonic. He received a spirited reply from a distinguished Pole in the person of Professor Balzer.² The great German historian had to be reminded that, when the Germans overran the Roman Empire, they had not the slightest solicitude for the civilization of the conquered country, and did not keep back on account of their own barbarism; that it was a poet of his own nation, Schiller, who said, 'There is room on earth for everybody.' What would a German say, asked Professor Balzer, if he were charged with being less civilized, say by a Frenchman or Italian, merely because German culture began comparatively late and for long was based on foreign, especially French and Italian, models? But the lesson apparently was not enough for Prussia. On every possible pretext the

¹ See *The Times*, December 30, 1901, p. 3, col. f.

² Professor of Polish Legal History in the University of Lwów, Member of the Polish and Bohemian Academies, and Corresponding Member of the Russian Academy.

'holy war' is still preached. A nation which is not German is, it would seem, destined only for the hostility of the Teutonic peoples.

Two other arguments are particularly dear to the Germans: they are fighting for civilization, and they are setting a profitable example to the world. No deed so barbarous which may not be justified on one or other of these grounds. Such arguments are particularly prominent in the struggle against the Poles. The Kaiser once stated, in Gniezno, that 'the name of German connotes civilization and freedom for all in religion as well as in thought and activity'.¹ I should like, therefore, to give some slight account of one or two of the most glorious achievements of Prussian culture in Poland. I shall try for the most part to confine myself to the twentieth century.² I must add that what I am about to say does not pretend in the slightest degree to be a full account of the immense tragedies which are the fate of millions of Poles in Prussia. Comparatively few of them are even ever reported: their occurrence is a fact of daily life in Poland and there is no necessity to repeat what everybody knows and feels.

It is difficult to know where to begin. But we may take as a first example the case of the Polish schoolboys in 1901. Some sixty of them were tried on a charge of

¹ *The Times*, August 11, 1905, p. 3, col. f.

² As a rule I shall refer to accounts published in *The Times*. Where that is impossible, the references are to Buzek's *Historia polityki narodowościowej rządu pruskiego wobec Polaków* (*History of the Nationalist Policy of the Prussian Government against the Poles*), Lwów, 1909. The work covers the period 1815-1908. Dr. Buzek is Professor of Administrative Law in the University of Lwów, and member of the Reichsrat and was chairman of its Committee for Social Insurance. A copy of his book is in the British Museum.

belonging to a 'secret society'; out of the number nearly fifty were convicted and sentenced, some of them to three months' imprisonment. The dark and dangerous purpose of this criminal confederacy was 'the study of the Polish language, literature, and history'. A still more heinous offence, in the eyes of the Court, was that the society was intended 'to promote the revival of Polish national feeling'.¹ The boys were sent to prison, to be instructed in the virtues of civilization—to learn, in the Kaiser's words, 'freedom in thought and activity'. Even this privilege was not considered sufficient. According to Professor Buzek's account, the boys, besides being imprisoned, were expelled from their schools—some of them, indeed, precluded from all the higher schools in Prussia. Their crime was manifestly greater than that of the German schoolboys who formed secret drinking societies, and who before that time had been disciplined only by the school authorities.²

The boys had not yet served their sentences when certain Poles were guilty of another and an equally odious crime. The Germans had, in the second half of the nineteenth century, abolished teaching in Polish. Attendance at school is compulsory; and Polish children therefore had to read and learn everything in German. Only by the most heroic efforts could their parents find time to teach them Polish writing; but they contrived to do so, in spite of all obstacles. Religious instruction was the only subject which could be taught in Polish in the schools—and that only here and there,³ not by any

¹ *The Times*, September 11, 1901, p. 3, col. *d*; September 14, 1901, p. 6, col. *c*. Note that in 1815 the King of Prussia in his proclamation assured the Poles that 'they need not give up their nationality'.

² Buzek, p. 487. ³ *The Times*, October 30, p. 5, 1906, col. *d*.

means universally. Wherever they could do so, the Germans substituted their own language for Polish, even in the teaching of religion. It happened that in Wrzesnia (in German, Wreschen) certain children 'refused to pay any attention to religious instruction imparted in the German language'. They said simply, 'We are Poles, not Germans, and do not wish to know anything about the German religion'. Some twenty of them, therefore, were 'detained, and, on their still proving obdurate', fourteen of their number received 'corporal punishment'.¹ Speaking of this incident in the Landtag, the Prussian Minister of Public Instruction said: 'the teacher had merely enforced a pedagogic principle, the excellence of which had been proved for two thousand years.'² But the barbarous Poles could not perceive the excellence of the principle nor the superiority of a German to a Polish prayer. The punishment inflicted on the children 'led to a great uproar among the parents and friends of the children, some of whom succeeded in forcing their way into the school, while the punishment was being administered, and were only expelled by the aid of the police'.³ A physician, Dr. Krzyzagorski, certified that the children's fingers were so swollen that they could not close their hands.⁴ 'For the violence then displayed, and for opprobrious and seditious language towards the inspector and the other school authorities,' twenty-five persons were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment⁵—one of them, a mother of five children to two and a half years.

¹ *The Times*, November 20, 1901, p. 5, cols. *d, e*.

² *Ibid.*, January 14, 1902, p. 3, col. *e*.

³ *Ibid.*, November 20, 1901, p. 5, col. *e*.

⁴ Buzek, p. 467.

⁵ *The Times*, November 20, 1901, p. 5, col. *e*.

It was after these highly cultured proceedings that Henryk Sienkiewicz, the author of *Quo Vadis?* addressed an open letter to (if I remember aright) the Kaiser. I may be permitted to quote from it at some length, for the reader will find in it, I think, an expression of what many must be feeling to-day :

. . . Not a hand had been raised against the master executioners. Not a single deed of violence had been perpetrated. And yet the Prussian Courts of Justice condemned the parents of those poor children who had been tortured in the Prussian schools, because, moved by despair and pity, they allowed words of indignation to escape their lips against such schools and such masters. . . . We . . . who, since a fraction of our nation has formed part of Prussia, are well acquainted with that *milieu*, we alone have no right to be surprised . . . One of their own authors, a German, once expressed the characteristic opinion that it was a mistake to think that an immoral policy did not deprave society and its future generations. What was bound to happen did happen. Ever since the time of Frederick II and even a still more remote period, Prussian policy has been but a series of crimes, of deeds of violence, of knavery, of humility towards the powerful, of tyranny towards the weak, of falsehoods, of violated treaties, of broken promises.

That is not only the opinion of foreign historians, but it is also that of independent German historians themselves. How, then, can we be surprised that in such circumstances a decomposition of souls should follow, that the sentiment of justice and truth should have degenerated, that moral sense should have completely disappeared, and that in the midst of the general depravity the school should have become an instrument of torture and the debased Courts of Justice the tools of savage instincts and of violence? . . . The only consolation in all this is that it cannot last. . . . Christian and cultured nations cannot submit to barbarism for any length of time. Nor can the German people be for

ever subjected to the Prussian element. . . . The future must bring, and unquestionably will bring, expiation and a gigantic evolution.¹

At that time the Kaiser was talking about sculpture, the relation of art to nature, and ideals. 'For us,' he said, 'for the German people, great ideals have become permanent possessions, while other nations have more or less lost them.'²

The case of Wrzesnia, of course, aroused a storm of indignation among the Poles. The German Government did its utmost to force her Austrian ally to prevent the Galician Poles from openly condemning Prussia; and the notorious Prince Eulenburg, then German ambassador at Vienna, had to exert himself very energetically to put down these scandalous Polish assaults on Prussian culture.³

Without tracing in detail the further development of this question, I will point out only one significant fact. Those 'wicked boys', as an influential Berlin journal described them, had been punished; but the 'example' was not sufficient. The series of tragedies continued. In 1906, M. H. de Noussaine, of the *Écho de Paris*, published a letter which had been addressed to him, undertaking at the same time to furnish the Prussian authorities with names and details. I will give a few extracts:

The Prussian Government persists in endeavouring to give religious instruction in German to the Polish children in most of the schools. . . . The children and their parents, above all among the working classes, are determined to resist this abuse of power. Hundreds

¹ *The Times*, November 29, 1901, p. 5, col. e.

² *Ibid.*, December 20, 1901, p. 3, cols. c, d.

³ *Ibid.*, December 6, 1901, p. 5, col. c.

of children have spontaneously declared to their teachers that they will not use a single word of German. They persist in their refusal in spite of being beaten and locked up in the dark. They can be seen in tears, begging the priests to pray to God to have pity upon their sufferings. . . . The school teachers and the Government are exasperated, and persecute both parents and children in an unheard-of fashion. The children are locked up, not even being allowed to return to their homes for dinner. In many schools the teachers have flogged the children until they lost consciousness.¹

The result was that nearly fifty thousand children throughout Prussian Poland 'went on strike'.² They refused 'to answer questions in German in the religious instruction classes, preferring to be kept in and even to be flogged'.³ The Prussian Government faced this shameful revolt with 'calmness and deliberation', as was semi-officially announced; in other words, it enumerated the draconic penalties which it proposed to inflict on rebellious parents and children.⁴ Is it necessary to add that they carried out their intention? Nevertheless, the number of the 'strikers' steadily increased, until it reached a hundred thousand. The Government employed all the coercive methods it had threatened, and many others besides. Thus, under a rule that parents are punishable for the non-attendance of their children at school, many parents were penalized, on the ground that by their disobedience the children were 'absent in spirit'. In some fifty cases, brothers of the children involved were expelled from the public school (*gymnasium*), for the sons of parents who taught their children to disobey the authorities were

¹ *The Times*, October 12, 1906, p. 3, cols. e, f.

² *Ibid.*, November 2, 1906, p. 3, col. b.

³ *Ibid.*, October 27, 1906, p. 7, col. b.

⁴ *Ibid.*, November 2, 1906, p. 3, col. b

thought likely to exercise a bad influence over their fellows.¹

A short time before these events a member of the Pan-German party had advocated the religious instruction in their native language of the Hereros of South-West Africa.² The same privilege was not considered fitting for the Polish nation.

The case of the children is not unique, nor even the most glaring of many others which might be cited. Let us take another example. In 1908 an imperial statute enacted that, except in international congresses, only the German language could be used in public meetings. An exception was made in the case of districts where at least 60 per cent. of the population had always been accustomed to use the native tongue. If, therefore, a Pole who has been expropriated by the Commission and who is unable to buy land, goes, let us say, to Westphalia, he cannot speak Polish in a public meeting; and the presence of 41 per cent. of Germans in any particular district of Poland makes it a crime to speak the Polish language in public meetings. And even where it is permissible to do so, the privilege is only temporary, for it extends only to 1928; and the restrictions and conditions imposed are, to any reasonable mind, intolerable.³

For many years it has been the established practice of the Government not to appoint any Polish officials or civil servants in the Polish provinces. Those who were admitted before this prohibition came into operation, or who agreed to serve in other parts, are subject to many restrictions. While engaged in their official

¹ Buzek, p. 474.

² *The Times*, December 7, 1906, p. 5, col. e.

³ S. 12 of the *Reichsvereinsgesetz*, 1908; as to other points of the Law of Association, cf. *The Times*, February 7, 1914, p. 7, col. c.

duties, for example, they must not use a single word of Polish. In 1898 the authorities of Gdansk ordered that every schoolmaster should be answerable to the Government if members of his family spoke Polish in private life.¹

The perfidy which characterizes the struggle is, if possible, even greater than its brutality. The Poles are German subjects ; in fact, in matters such as conscription or taxes, they are Germans. But they are Poles—and enemies—whenever there is an opportunity to violate their rights. The references made to the Poles by ministers in Parliament are invariably contemptuous or insulting. Singing the Polish anthem is now, of course, a crime. Yet in the Franco-Prussian War, Prussian generals ordered it to be played when Polish conscripts were sent to the attack. On one occasion the president of a Polish society was prosecuted and convicted, because on one of the society's excursions some Polish songs were sung. The Public Prosecutor admitted that the words were harmless, but held that the melody was likely to provoke a breach of the peace.²

The same policy does not shrink from encouraging immorality if it suits its ends to do so. Only recently there was considerable discussion in the Prussian Diet about a white slave trader in a Polish town, who was granted immunity by the police because he was doing useful service as a political agent.³

Out of the taxes paid by Poles, as well as by others, a 'settlement commission' was established in the 'eighties

¹ Buzek, p. 513.

² Judgement of the Court at Grudziadz, April 29, 1905 ; Buzek, p. 527.

³ A part of this case is stated in *The Times*, February 21, 1914, p. 8, col. c

to promote German colonization in Polish districts. The commissioners paid high prices, encouraged Poles to sell their land, and subjected those who were unwilling to do so to all kinds of disabilities. But they met with little success ; and in the year 1908 an Expropriation Act was passed, in open violation of the German Imperial Constitution, and as another shining example of Prussian civilization. In the Polish provinces, where the interests of *Deutschtum* require it, the Settlement Commission could effect the expropriation of the landowner in order to make room for German colonists. The first case under this enactment was that of a Polish widow with two children. The land had been owned by her husband's ancestors for an exceedingly long time ; but the tenant was ruthlessly evicted to make way for the grasping Prussian.

The Expropriation Act can be employed for many purposes. It was primarily intended to enable the Commission to acquire land, since the Poles refused to sell a 'satisfactory' quantity of it. It was also intended to ruin as many Polish landowners as possible ; and therefore the compensation given is assessed according to a semi-official estimate—much lower, of course, than the actual value of the land. When the proprietors sold voluntarily, they could ask only a sacrifice price, for they knew that the Commission might at any moment step in and offer even less. Conversely, if a Pole wishes to buy land, he is unable to offer a price as high as would be asked of and could be paid by German purchasers, for his tenure is never secure from the Commissioners, and he is always liable to be called on to sell at a loss.

I should add that the Government spares no pains to make the methods of its officials as vexatious as possible

to all Poles who are true to their nationality. A special bonus (Ostmarkenzulage) in addition to their salary is awarded at the discretion of the Government to its officers in Prussian Poland in proportion to the zeal which they display in the discharge of their duties. The reader may judge for himself what kind of 'zeal' such a system is likely to inspire in the Government's 'publicans and sinners'.

Sufficient has been said, I hope, to provide an answer to the questions I asked at the beginning of this pamphlet. The reader of the facts I have stated may find himself able to agree with Professor Balzer's words :

To a great part of the German peoples, the interests of culture have always been associated with the State interest, i. e. the State interest has been in the first place. They carried civilization to the Slavonic East to gain for themselves political advantages, and they did not hesitate to give up the cause of culture wherever their own egoistic political interests required some sacrifice. Politicians and Germanizers, in a higher degree than civilizers, they perpetually identified the idea of culture with the idea of their own State and their own nationality ; they believed and wished to persuade the world—they even wanted the world to believe them—that the way to civilization leads only through Germany, and that there can be no better fortune for other peoples than to attain by that way to greater perfection. They proclaimed themselves chosen guardians of all who began to engage in the pursuits of culture later than themselves, without asking whether those others desired such guardianship, without reflecting that they could work for culture independently, having been endowed by God with the same abilities as Germans. . . . The Germans offered culture to the Slavs, usually at the price of their giving up the greatest treasure, their own nationality ; where the Slavs would not pay that price, the Germans simply obstructed their independent development and did not allow them to carry on the work of civilization,

. . . German culture is neither the first, nor the last, nor the only culture which leads to perfection. . . .'

May I, in conclusion, suggest to the reader one lesson among the many which will come out of the present great struggle? When the war is over, however much of promise and hope it may ultimately mean for Poland, she will undoubtedly be left in a condition of tragic desolation and misery. But every endeavour will be immediately used to make good her enormous losses; Europe will have learned that no great Power can safely allow a weaker nation to be oppressed, for the crimes committed against one people, if left unpunished, are likely to be repeated against others; and it may be hoped that people in the West will look at Poland through their own, and not 'through German eyes'. If the Western nations will try to come into closer contact with their Eastern friends, they will find much of interest, much that they will consider worth knowing and perhaps admiring. They will find a civilization which has grown up without the aid of militarism, and a principle of national solidarity and self-reliance combined with respect for individual rights. Above all, they will find true, devoted, and patriotic hearts. Perhaps they will see less wealth and material power than elsewhere; but they will also see less hypocrisy and more sterling humanity.

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TURKEY IN
EUROPE AND ASIA

WITH A MAP

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THE
MUSEUM OF THE
MIDDLE EAST

THE
MUSEUM OF THE
MIDDLE EAST

MAP

Between pages 12 and 13

THE
MUSEUM OF THE
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TURKEY IN EUROPE AND ASIA

TURKEY is an incalculable Power, the most paradoxical that ever was or, let us hope, will be! At the present moment her national indebtedness—funded, floating, and unprovided—is approaching two hundred millions sterling. The mere annual charge on a part of that debt, the part covered by loans, amounts to about a third of her actual revenue, which is not one-seventh of her liabilities. It is scarcely two years since she emerged from a war for existence, which added above a whole year's revenue to her debt and more than that to her liabilities, robbed her of one-tenth of that revenue and an eighth of her population by the loss of Macedonia and the Isles, and demonstrated her incompetence to wage war under modern conditions. After the war, fast tied and bound as she was already in international shackles, she riveted yet others on herself by perpetuating foreign monopolies, and mortgaging what was left of her economic liberty to Paris bankers and the Government which so subtly and effectually controls their operations. Drained of money, men, and repute, she seemed the one State in Europe which could not stir. *E pur si muove!* Here she is at it again, confronting, with allies who can give her only scant assistance from afar, a first-class military Power which can strike her on one flank, while allies, not less powerful to hurt, strike her on the other. She will surely be beaten. If she were any other of the secondary Powers she would be annihilated. But, being Turkey, she holds a charmed life.

When you have said that she is practically bankrupt ; that the population of her immense territory is less than thirty to the square mile and steadily falling below this beggarly average ; that a good half of it is profoundly disaffected ; that her government is at present in the hands of a body of men who represent, not her Asiatic elements of strength, but the European Byzantinism which is her weakness ; that the great majority of her people is in opposition to the Government—when you have said all this, you have stated Turkey's national account quite correctly on the debit side ; but there remain ' moral ' assets to credit, which, even as things are at the present moment, may compensate.

The least potent of these is the protection hitherto secured to her by the mutual jealousies of each and all of the Powers. Obviously, this has lost value in the actual international situation. If Russia were to move on Constantinople now, Great Britain would hardly wish to thwart her ; and whether the former captured it or was forestalled by a Teutonic occupation, the result to the Ottoman Empire would be about the same. Indeed, even were the Great Powers disengaged, it is doubtful whether any of them would fight nowadays to keep another out of Constantinople, or, for that matter, to keep out a secondary Power of the Balkan group which might be able, alone or with allies, to dispossess the Turk. The strategic and economic importance of Constantinople has long been declining *pari passu* with increase in the power and speed of ships. Even had the Turks taken measures to develop the possibilities of their natural intercontinental land-routes by making the Marmora region a focus of railways and roads, and bridging the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, the all-sea and half-sea routes would still have kept and increased the pre-

ponderant importance which they have already won. As it is—well, every one knows how far, on either the European or the Asiatic side, the Marmora region is a focus of railways or roads! Moreover, not only the international but the local importance of Constantinople has diminished. The wars of two years ago dealt a knock-out blow to her Balkan position. The control of the peninsula, which she so long dominated, is now in commission at Sophia, Salonica, Belgrade, and Athens. So far as European territories are concerned, Constantinople is become hardly more than the chief town of the small, sparsely inhabited district of Southern Roumelia, which is run by the Government at an annual loss of about half a million.

More potent are the other 'moral' assets of Turkey. These are first (strange to say!) her financial position, and, second (almost stranger!) her prestige. These have saved her from annihilation in the past times and again, and may save her yet. Let us see what they mean, and what limits, if any, there are to their potency.

Turkey's financial position, put bluntly, has been for many years the unsatisfactory but oddly protective one of a debtor, with certain imperfectly realized assets, who is so deeply involved with powerful creditors, but so utterly unable to repay the principal, that their best hope of recouping themselves is to keep him going by further loans. He is not actually bankrupt; and it is his creditors' interest that he should not be so in form. Accordingly, they not only continue to finance him, but shut their eyes to continued extravagances up to a point. Turkey's chief creditor is France, who held nearly sixty per cent. of the Ottoman Debt before the Balkan Wars, and found thirty millions more for her profligate debtor afterwards. Germany stands second with something

over twenty per cent., and Great Britain comes third with the remainder to her dubious credit. Two of the members of the Triple Entente, therefore, will think a great many times before they push matters to extremes with Turkey ; and well does Turkey know it ! It is all very well for Russia to propose, as a matter of course, to throttle the unedifying Old Man, but not for France.

If any considerable part of this enormous debt were represented by national plant which, taken over *vi et armis*, might be developed to return a profit on its cost, well and good. But Turkey has taken good care to expend nine-tenths of her loans on transitory and purely unremunerative things. The situation, therefore, is this : whoever, be it Russia or any one else, dispossesses the Turk in any considerable part of his Empire must not only take over a dead weight of virtually unsecured debt, but face the prospect of putting at least as much again into the country before it has the slightest chance of becoming a paying concern.

So the Ottoman Empire has been, and perhaps still will be, allowed to go on its way. It possesses considerable material assets, capable of being developed to far greater value. Although about half its immense extent is desert, steppe, and mountain, the other half includes broad areas of exceptional fertility which produce commodities of exceptional value, such as silk, tobacco, fine wool, and various fruits. Almost all the Empire lies in the most favoured part of the northern temperate zone, and it would be hard to find on the globe districts of greater natural possibilities than the littoral valleys and great upland plains of Asia Minor, the plains of North and Middle Syria, the interfluvial region of Southern Mesopotamia, and the lower basins of the left-bank affluents of the Tigris. Add extra-

ordinary variety and wealth of unexploited minerals in the mountain districts of Asia Minor and Kurdistan, an intercontinental situation and a long sea-board indented with some of the finest natural harbours in the world, and your sum total will represent a potentiality of prosperity which accounts for the fact that the most improvident, uneconomical, and destructive administration in history can still draw profits from Asia. In spite of secular waste, in spite even of the disasters of two years ago, the Ottoman revenue shows progressive elasticity, especially in customs returns from oversea trade, ill as the system of collection is conceived to encourage any trade. Thanks mainly to more careful and honest administration of this department under British supervision, over five millions sterling (nearly twenty per cent.) were added to the revenue between 1908 and the outbreak of the Balkan War, and recovery from the set-back of that war was already pronounced before the present trouble began. One could do almost anything with territories which, having been treated as Asiatic Turkey has been treated, still, in a measure, thrive!

Thus the very desperation of Turkey's financial position has been hitherto a protection to her. The certain loss involved in foreclosure, added to the opposition which any one creditor, who proposed such a course, expected to meet from the rest, has not only deterred all, but left them no choice but to agree to bolster her up. Will this continue to be Turkey's case? Obviously, if of her own motion she should commit bankruptcy by repudiating her international debt (as, it is stated, she proposes at the present juncture), it will not. Once bankrupt, she loses all protection whatever from her financial position. Not less obviously, the actual inter-

national situation renders it possible and probable that two of her creditors, holding together nearly 80 per cent. of her debt, may agree to foreclose jointly, irrespective of any one else. The question whether they should proceed to do so or not would be influenced no longer by financial interest in keeping Turkey going, but by quite other considerations, to the chief of which we shall come in a moment.

Short, however, of suicide by bankruptcy, will Turkey find her financial position protect her as heretofore? At an increasing rate during recent years her great creditors have exacted, in return for loans, not merely security for high interest and repayment of capital, but also exclusive concessions in which their nationals may invest. For example, the thirty millions which French bankers agreed to lend to Turkey after the Balkan Wars, imposed extraordinary conditions in the shape of concessions to French capitalists to construct railways, roads, harbour-works, and the like, almost all over the Ottoman Empire. By the present state of war these concessions are all cancelled. France in particular, therefore, stands to lose heavily, even should the interest and capital of her actual loans prove still to be secure. That is to say, a situation has arisen in which one at least of the belligerents may find that its prospective national loss outweighs any gain to be expected from the continued solvency of Turkey; and even, therefore, should the latter think better of burning her financial boats, she is not unlikely to find the protection which her financial position used to afford her dangerously diminished or even destroyed.

The third and last 'moral' asset, prestige, is less calculable and more elusive, but at the same time more effective and less easy to dispose of. It is in part secular

and in greater part religious. The first element is implied in that name *Roum* by which the western dominion of the Turks has been known ever since the Seljuks won Asia Minor. Apart from the prestige of their own early conquests, the Ottomans inherited, and in a measure retain in the Near East, the traditional prestige of the greatest Empire which ever held it. They stand not only for their own past but also for whatever still lives of the prestige of Rome. Theirs is still the repute of the imperial people *par excellence*, chosen and called to rule.

That this repute should continue, after the sweeping victories of Semites and subsequent centuries of Ottoman retreat before other heirs of Rome, is a paradox to be explained only by the fact that a large part of the population of the Near East remains at this day in about the same stage of civilization and knowledge as in the time of, say, Heraclius. The Turks, be it remembered, were and are foreigners in a great part of their Asiatic Empire equally with the Greeks of Byzantium or the Romans of Italy; and their establishment in Constantinople nearly five centuries ago did not mean to the indigenous peoples of the Near East what it meant to Europe—a victory of the East over the West—so much as a continuation of immemorial ‘Roman’ dominion still exercised from the same Imperial centre. Since Roum first spread its shadow over the Near East, many men of many races, whose variety was imperfectly realized, if realized at all, by the peasants of Asia Minor, Syria, Mesopotamia, and Egypt, have ruled in its name, and the Ottomans, whose governmental system was in part the Byzantine, made but one more change which meant the same old thing. The peasants know, of course, about those Semitic victories; but they know

also that if the Semite has had his day of triumph and imposed, as was right and proper, his God and his Prophet on Roum—even, as many believed, and some may be found in remoter regions who still believe, on all mankind—he has returned to his own place south of Taurus ; and still Roum is Roum, natural indefeasible Lord of the World.

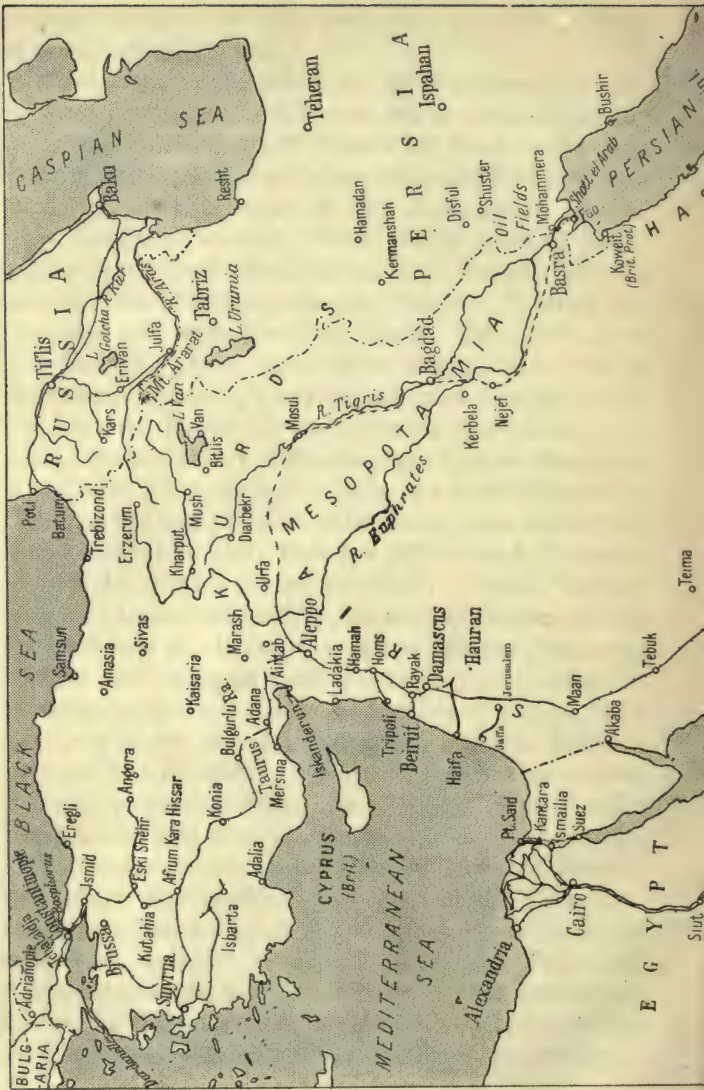
Such a belief is dying now, of course ; but it dies slowly and hard. It still constitutes a real asset of the Ottomans, and will not cease to have value until they lose Constantinople. On the possession of the old imperial city it depends for whatever vitality it retains. You may demonstrate, as you will, and as many publicists have done since the Balkan Wars and before, what and how great economic, political, and social advantages would accrue to the Turks, if they could bring themselves to transfer their capital to Asia. Here they would be rid of Roumelia, which costs, and will always cost them, more than it yields. Here they could concentrate Moslems where their co-religionists are already the great majority, and so have done with the everlasting friction and weakness entailed in jurisdiction over preponderant Christian elements. Here they might throw off Byzantinism as a garment and no longer be forced to face two ways, but live and govern with single minds as the Asiatics they are. Vain illusion, as the Turkish Imperialists know ! It is Empire that would fall away as a garment so soon as the Near East realized that Turks no longer ruled in the Imperial City. Enver Pasha and the Committee were amply justified in straining the resources of the Ottoman Empire to cracking-point two years ago, not merely to retain Constantinople, but also to recover Adrianople and a territory in Europe large enough to bulk as Roum. Nothing that happened

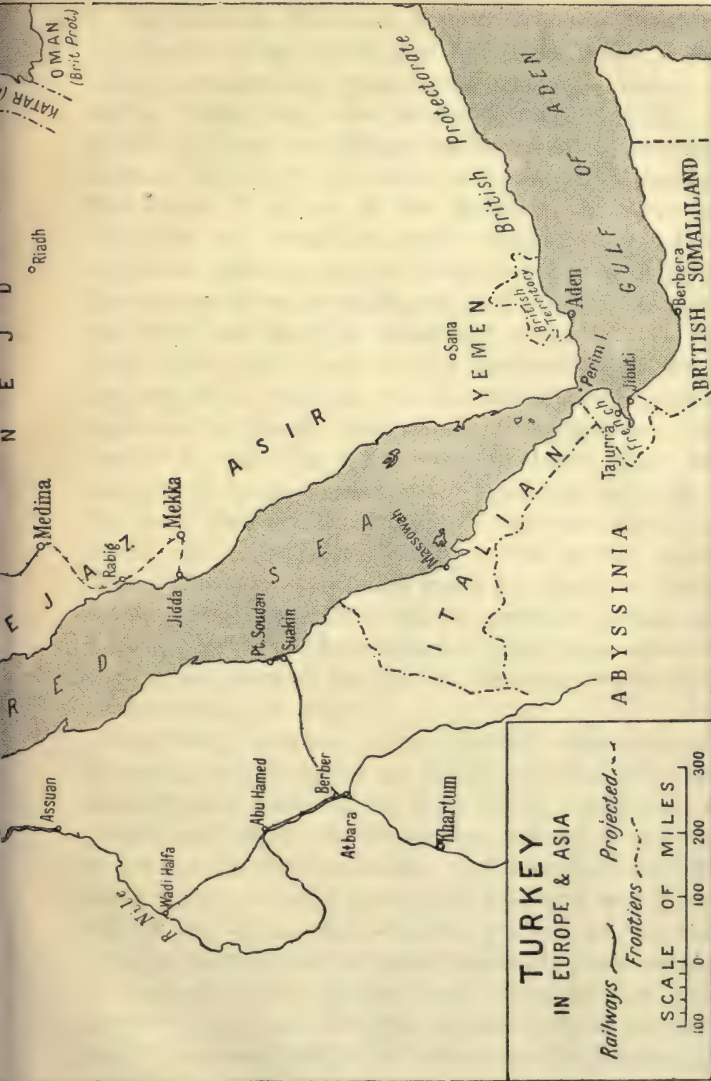
in that war made so greatly for the continuation of the old order in Asiatic Turkey as the reoccupation of Adrianople. The one occasion on which Europeans in Syria had reason to expect a general explosion was when premature rumours of the entry of the Bulgarian army into Stamboul gained currency for a few hours. That explosion, had the news proved true or not been contradicted in time, would have been a panic-stricken, ungovernable impulse of anarchy, conscious that an old world had passed away and ignorant what conceivable new world could come to be. The perilous moment passed, to be succeeded by general diffusion of a belief that the inevitable catastrophe was only postponed. In the breathing-time allowed, Arabs, Kurds, and Armenians discussed and planned together revolt from the moribund Turk, and, separately, the mutual massacre and plundering of one another. Arab national organizations and nationalist journals sprang to life at Beirut and elsewhere. The revival of Arab Empire was talked of and names of possible capitals and kings were bandied about. One Arab province, the Hasa, actually broke away from the Turks. Then men began to say that the Bulgarians would not advance beyond Tchataldja : the Balkan States were at war among themselves : finally, Adrianople had been re-occupied. And all was as in the beginning. Budding life withered in the Arab movement, and the Near East settled down once more in the persistent shadow of Roum.

That is the lesser element in Turkey's protective prestige, dependent on the retention of Constantinople and doomed to disappear the moment that the Ottoman State relinquishes Europe. Meanwhile there it is for what it is worth ; and it is actually worth a tradition of submission, natural and honourable, to a race of

superior destiny, which is instinctive in some millions of savage simple hearts.

What, then, of the other, the greater element? The religious prestige of the Ottoman Power as the repository of Caliphial authority, and Trustee for Islam in the Holy Land of Arabia, is an asset almost impossible to estimate. Would a death struggle of the Ottomans in Europe rouse the Sunni world? Would the Moslems of India, Afghanistan, Turkestan, China, and Malaya take up arms for the Ottoman Sultan as Caliph? Nothing but the event will prove that they would. They have never done so yet. They have never shown much sign of disposition to do so in any of the crises through which the Ottoman Power has been passing this century and more. Quite recently, indications (such as the manifesto of the Agha Khan) do not point to any prevalent conviction that the fate of Islam is bound up with that of the Turks. Jihad, or Holy War, is a difficult and dangerous weapon for Young Turks to wield: difficult because their own Islamic sincerity is suspect and they are taking the field now as clients of a *giaour* people: dangerous because the Ottoman nation itself includes numerous Christian elements, indispensable to its economy. Still, since one cannot be sure, one cannot, in Great Britain's position, be too careful. The recent Italian attack on an Ottoman possession did lead to a truce of Allah between bitter traditional foes, the Turks and the Arabs in the Yemen, and to active and durable co-operation between the two in the hinterland of Tripoli and Cyrenaica. During the Tabah dispute in 1906, Egypt gave abundant signs that, heartily as she used to hate Turks and Turkish administration, her memory of that enmity was less strong than her sense of solidarity with the leading Moslem Power in its opposition to our Christian selves.





Oxford

H.S. Hatibi

The Ottoman Sultanate undoubtedly can count on its prestige based on religion appealing widely, overriding counteracting sentiments, and, if it rouses to action, rousing the most dangerous temper of all. It is futile to deny, and dangerous to disregard, its possibilities. Especially is it futile to pooh-pooh it because Mohammed V is not of the Koreish, and owes his Caliphate to a sixteenth-century transfer. These facts are either unknown or not borne in mind by half the Sunnites on whom he might call, and weigh far less with the other half than his hereditary dominion over the Holy Cities, sanctioned by the prescription of nearly four centuries. Still less does it avail to quote opinions expressed by Moslem *litterati* in India or elsewhere, that George V, since he rules more Muslamîn than Mohammed V, is the true Caliph! The vast majority of the Sunni Faithful do regard the Ottoman Sultan as armed with Caliphial authority, so far as any exists. The only question is whether under any possible circumstances that belief would lead to combined action, and if so, to what? The importance of the religious element in Ottoman prestige lies just in our complete inability to answer that question!

One thing, however, can be foretold with certainty. The religious prestige of an Ottoman Sultan, who had definitely lost control of the Holy Places, would cease as quickly and utterly as the secular prestige of one who had evacuated Constantinople: and since the loss of the latter would probably precipitate an Arab revolt, and cut off the Hejaz, the religious element in Ottoman prestige may be said to depend as much as the secular on Constantinople. All the more reason why the Committee of Union and Progress should not have accepted that well-meant advice of European publicists! A

successful revolt of the Arab-speaking provinces would indeed sound the death-knell of the Ottoman Empire. No other event would be so immediately and surely catastrophic.

This being so, it is odd that the Committee, which has shown no mean understanding of some conditions essential to Ottoman Empire, should have done so little hitherto to conciliate Arab susceptibilities. Neither in the constitution of the Parliament nor in the higher commands of the Army have the Arab-speaking peoples been given anything like their fair share ; and loudly and insistently have they protested. Perhaps the Committee, whose leading members are of a markedly Europeanized type, understands Asia less well than Europe. Certainly its programme of Ottomanization, elaborated by military ex-attachés, by Jew bankers and officials from Salonica, and by doctors, lawyers, and other *intellectuels* fresh from Paris, is conceived on lines which offer the pure Asiatic very little scope. The free and equal Ottomans are all to take their cue from Turks, and from Turks only of the Byzantine sort which the European provinces, and especially the city of Constantinople, breed. After the revolution nothing in Turkey struck one so much as the apparition on the top of things everywhere of a type of Turk who has the characteristic qualities of the Levantine Greek. Young officers, controlling their elders, only needed a change of uniform to pass in an Athenian crowd. Spare and dapper officials, presiding in seats of authority over Kurds and Arabs, reminded one of Greek journalists. Turkish journalists themselves treated one to rhodomontades punctuated with restless gesticulation, which revived memories of Athenian cafés in war-time. It was the Byzantine triumphing over the Asiatic ; and the most

Asiatic elements in the Empire were the least likely to meet with the appreciation or sympathy of the former.

Are the Arab-speaking peoples, therefore, likely to revolt, or be successful in splitting the Ottoman Empire, if they do? The present writer would like to say at once that, in his opinion, this consummation of the Empire is not devoutly to be wished. Bad, according to our standards, as Turkish government is, native Arab government, when not in tutelage to Europeans, has generally proved itself worse, when tried in the Ottoman area in modern times. Where it is of a purely Bedawin barbaric type, as in the Emirates of Central Arabia, it does well enough; but if the population be contaminated ever so little with non-Arab elements, practices, or ideas, Arab administration seems incapable of producing effective government. It has had chances in the Holy Cities at intervals, and for longer periods in the Yemen. But a European, long resident in the latter country, who had groaned under Turkish administration, where it has always been most oppressive, bore witness that the rule of native Imams, who shook off the Turkish yoke in his time, only served to replace oppressive government by oppressive anarchy.

The substitution of Arab administration for Turkish, therefore, would necessarily entail European tutelage of the parts of the Arab-speaking area in which Powers, like ourselves, have vital interests—Syria, for example, Southern Mesopotamia, and, probably, Hejaz. The last-named, in particular, would involve us in a very ticklish and thankless task. We might put in Egyptians as caretakers, but hardly with much hope of success without a leaven of Europeans, whose residence in the Holy Land would excite unappeasable susceptibilities; and we had better think many times before we exalt an imperfectly

controlled Khedive into Trustee of Islam ! Conceivably, the Shereefial House of Mecca, advised by Indian Moslem officials, might be capable of securing well-being in Hejaz ; but this House has never yet proved itself a satisfactory substitute for the Turk. On the whole, where every alternative course bristles with such difficulties and dangers, one can only be thankful for the Turkish caretaker and loth to see him dismissed.

An Arab revolt, however, might break out whether the Triple Entente desired its success or not. What chance of success would it have ? The peoples of the Arab part of the Ottoman Empire are a congeries of differing races, creeds, sects, and social systems, with no common bond except language. The physical character of their land compels a good third of them to be nomadic predatory barbarians, feared by the other two-thirds. The settled folk are divided into Moslem and Christian (not to mention a large Jewish element), the cleavage being more abrupt than in Western Turkey and the tradition and actual spirit of mutual enmity more separative. Further, each of these main creed-divisions is subdivided. Even Islam in this region includes a number of incompatible sects, such as the Ansariye, the Metawali, and the Druses in the Syrian mountains, Shiite Arabs on the Gulf coast and the Persian border, with pagan Kurds and Yezidis in the latter region and North Mesopotamia. As for the Christians, their divisions are notorious, most of these being subdivided again into two or more hostile communions apiece. It is almost impossible to imagine the inhabitants of Syria concerting a common plan or taking common action. The only elements among them which have shown any political sense or capacity for political organization are Christian. The Maronites of the Lebanon are most

conspicuous among these ; but neither their numbers nor their traditional relations with their neighbours qualify them to form the nucleus of a free united Syria. The ' Arab Movement ' up to the present has consisted in little more than talk and journalese. It has never developed any considerable organization to meet that stable efficient organization which the Committee of Union and Progress directs throughout the Ottoman dominions.

At the present moment this Committee has concentrated in Southern Syria a very considerable force of second-line troops stiffened with German officers, and has secured the co-operation of a majority of the Bedawin tribes of the Syrian and North Arabian deserts by gifts of arms and money. Whatever demonstrations this force may be bidden attempt against the Suez Canal and the Delta, it has, quite possibly, in reality, been collected and concentrated just where it is—at a half-way point between the Syrian and Arabian areas—rather to overawe and keep quiet the Arab-speaking Ottomans than in the hope of achieving a reconquest of Egypt. In any case, so long as it remains effective where it is, it makes a rising either in Syria or the Hejaz very unlikely to happen, and even less likely to succeed.

Whether that force will be able seriously to attack Egypt and what would happen if it did, a layman may be excused from prophesying. It has often been pointed out that the stretch of desert between Gaza and the Nile Delta has never availed by itself to save Egypt from invasion by land ; but, on the other hand, no invader has tried to pass it since parts of its most practicable track and the western ends of all its paths can be reached by naval guns with high-explosive shells. An advance on Egypt from El-Arish, without free use of the coast-track, would have to be made with none but

light artillery and on a very narrow front. Small raiding parties might (with luck) pass our lines and reach the Canal's bank some fifteen miles west between the Bitter Lakes and Kantara, and, if not prevented or observed by patrols (the last not a very probable contingency in view of the strength with which we are now holding this line), could place camel-borne mines in the channel which might sink one or more ships and close the waterway. This seems to be about the limit of effective Turkish action, short of a successful sympathetic rising of the Egyptians themselves.

Per contra, it is easy for Powers which hold the sea to throw a force into Syria. The strip of practicable country between the coast and sheer desert is little more than a hundred miles wide at many points, and both the supplies and the retreat of the Syro-German army of Ma'an would be quickly at the mercy of a few thousand men with good artillery. Damascus, Homs, and Aleppo would be obvious main points to occupy, and with the coast controlled from the sea, Ottoman dominion in Syria, and probably in Arabia as well, would be at an end in a week. If Bedawins continued militant, their exclusion from Syrian and Lower Mesopotamian markets would soon bring them to heel. Even their thin life cannot go on without certain necessities and luxuries, which Arabian oases do not supply. The settled folk, even in the towns, would give little or no trouble, and considerable elements might be expected to greet a French or British expeditionary force with ebullient enthusiasm destined to cool after some years' experience of even-handed western justice, regularity in tax-collection, and sanitary prejudices.

In the rest of the Ottoman Empire what may or will happen in the event of the War being fought to a finish ?

That is, to a finish of the present Turkish policy and armaments. Asia Minor will stand by the Turkish cause, even if Europe and Constantinople, and even if the Holy Places and all the Arab-speaking provinces, be lost. Its allegiance does not depend on either the tradition of Roum or the Caliphate, but on essential unity with the Ottoman nation. In fact, Asia Minor *is* Turkey. There the Ottoman nation was formed ; there, prepared equally by Byzantine domination and by Seljukian influence, the great mass of the people long ago identified itself insensibly and completely with the tradition and hope of the Ottomans. The subsequent occupation of the Byzantine capital by the heirs of the Byzantine system, and their still later assumption of Caliphial responsibility, were not needed to cement the union. Even a military occupation by Russia or by any other strong Power would not detach Anatolia from the Turkish unity ; for a thing cannot be detached from itself. But, of course, that occupation might cause the unity itself to cease to be after long years.

Such an occupation, however, would probably not be seriously resisted or subsequently rebelled against by the Moslem majority in Asia Minor, supposing Turkish armaments to have been crushed. The Anatolian population is a sober, labouring peasantry, essentially agricultural and wedded to the soil. The levies for Yemen and Europe, which have gone far to deplete and exhaust it of recent years, were composed of men who fought to order and without imagination steadily and faithfully, as their fathers had fought ; but without lust for war, or Arabian tradition of fighting for its own sake, and with little, if any, fanaticism. Attempts to inspire Anatolian troops with religious rage in the late Balkan Wars were failures. They were asked to fight in too

modern a way under too many Teutonic officers. The result illustrated a prophecy ascribed to Mukhtar Pasha, of Yemen fame. When German instructors were first introduced into Turkey, he foretold that they would be the end of the Ottoman army. No, these Anatolians desire nothing better than to follow their plough-oxen, and live their common village life, under any master who will let them be.

Elements of the Christian minority, however, Armenian and Greek, would give trouble with their developed ideas of nationality and irrepressible tendency to 'Europize'. They would present, indeed, problems of which at present one cannot foresee the solution. It seems inevitable that an autonomous Armenia, like an autonomous Poland, must be constituted ere long; but where? There is no geographical unit of the Ottoman area in which Armenians are the majority. If they cluster more thickly in the vilayets of Angora, Sivas, Erzerum, Kharput, and Van, i. e. in easternmost Asia Minor, than elsewhere, and form a village people of the soil, they are consistently a minority in any large administrative district. Numerous, too, in the trans-Tauric vilayets of Adana and Aleppo, the seat of their most recent independence, they are townsmen in the main, and not an essential element of the agricultural population. Even if a considerable proportion of the Armenians, now dispersed through towns of Western Asia Minor and in Constantinople, could be induced to concentrate in a reconstituted Armenia (which is doubtful, seeing how addicted they are to general commerce and what may be called parasitic life), they could not fill out both the Greater and the Lesser Armenias of history, in sufficient strength to overbear the Turkish and Kurdish elements. The widest area which might

be constituted autonomous Armenia with good prospect of self-sufficiency would be the present Russian province, where the head-quarters of the national religion lie, with the addition of the actual Turkish provinces of Erzerum, Van, and Kharput. But, if Russia had brought herself to make a self-denying ordinance, she would have to police her new Armenia very strongly for some years ; for an acute Kurdish problem would confront it, and no concentration of nationals could be looked for from the Armenia Irredenta of Diarbekr, Urfa, Aleppo, Aintab, Marash, Adana, Kaisariyeh, Sivas, Angora, and Trebizond (not to mention farther and more foreign towns), until public security was assured in what for generations has been a cockpit. The Kurd is, of course, an Indo-European as much as the Armenian, and rarely a true Moslem ; but it would be a very long time indeed before these facts reconciled him to the domination of the race which he has plundered for three centuries. Most of the 'Turks' of Eastern Asia Minor are descendants of converted Armenians ; but their assimilation also would be slow and doubtful. Islam, more rapidly and completely than any other creed, extinguishes racial sympathies.

The Anatolian Greeks are less numerous but not less difficult to provide for. The scattered groups of them on the plateau—in Cappadocia, Pontus, the Konia district—and on the eastward coast-lands would offer no serious difficulty to a lord of the interior. But those in the western river-basins from Isbarta to the Marmora, and those on the western and north-western littorals, are of a more advanced and cohesive political character, being imbued with nationalism, intimate with their independent nationals, and actively interested in Hellenic national politics. What happens at Athens has long concerned them more than what happens at

Constantinople : and with Greece occupying the islands in the daily view of many of them, they are coming to regard themselves more and more every day as citizens of Graecia Irredenta. What is to be done with these ? What, in particular, with Smyrna, the second city of the Ottoman Empire and the first of ' Magna Graecia ' ? Its three and a half hundred thousand souls include the largest Greek urban population resident in any one city. To these problems I call attention, but venture no solution.

Nor, indeed, in anything else concerning the Ottoman Empire does the present writer presume to be among the prophets. He has but tried to set forth what may delay and what may precipitate the collapse of an Empire, whose doom has been long foreseen, often planned, invariably postponed ; and, further, to indicate some difficulties which are bound to confront heirs of Turkey on the morrow of her death and will be better met the better they are understood before her final agony—if this is, indeed, to be !

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GREEK POLICY SINCE 1882

MODERN GREECE has just achieved an epoch in her history. Till the year before last, she was numbered in that category of nations, unhappily only too common in the Nearer East, that cannot begin to order their life, because they have not yet emerged from the struggle for existence. To us in Western Europe, 'politics' mean primarily the organization of efforts to improve a country's internal economy; but a foreigner who picked up a Greek newspaper two years ago, would have found in it none of the matter with which he was familiar in his own, such as the discussion of social reconstruction, economic development, and financial policy, but a watchful pursuit of the relations between all the European Powers: he would have heard foreign politics talked in the cafés with the same vigour and detail that Englishmen in a railway-carriage would have been spending on the measures of the present Government, and with far greater knowledge than the English quidnuncs could have brought to bear on an international question, if they had happened to stumble across it, and the conversation would always have led up in the end to the same apparently unanswerable challenge to the future: 'When will the dead weight of Turkish misgovernment be removed from the enslaved majority of our nation? When shall we win by unity the strength to hold our own against our Balkan neighbours, more bitterly hostile to us than the Turk, and eager to perpetuate the slavery of our brothers after the Turk is gone?'

This preoccupation with events beyond the frontiers was not caused by any lack of needs and difficulties within them. The army was the most prominent object of public activity, but it was not an aggressive speculation, or an investment of national profits deliberately calculated to bring in one day a larger return ; it was a necessity of life, and its efficiency was barely maintained out of the national poverty. In fact, it was almost the only public utility with which the nation could afford to provide itself ; the traveller from Great Britain would have been amazed at the miserable state of all reproductive public works : the railways were few and far between, their routes roundabout, their rolling-stock scanty, so that trains were both rare and slow ; wheel-roads were no commoner a feature in Greece than railways are here, and such stretches as had been constructed had often never come into use, because they had just failed to reach their goal or were still waiting for their bridges, so that they were simply falling into decay and allowing the money spent on them to lapse into a dead loss ; while the Peiraiæus was the only port in the country where steamers could come alongside a quay, and discharge their cargoes directly on shore ; elsewhere, the vessel must anchor many cables' lengths out, and depend on the slow and expensive services of lighters, for lack of pier construction and dredging operations ; in fact, the fifth largest port in the kingdom,¹ Kalamata, the economic outlet for the richest part of Peloponnesos, was a mere open roadstead, where all ships that called were kept at a distance by the silt from a mountain torrent, and so placed in imminent danger of being

¹ The four chief ports being Peiraiæus, Patras, Syra, and Volos.

driven, by the first storm, upon the rocks of a neighbouring peninsula.

These grave shortcomings were doubtless due in part to the geographical character of the country, but it was clear from what had been accomplished, that it would have been both possible and profitable to attempt much more, if the nation's energy could have been secured for the work. But it is hard to tinker at details when you are kept in a perpetual fever by a question of life and death ; for the great preliminary questions of national unity and self-government, before which all other interests paled, were no will-o'-the-wisps of theoretical politics : it needs a long political education to appreciate abstract ideas, and the Greeks were still in their political infancy, but the realization of Greater Greece implied for them the satisfaction of all those concrete needs : so long as the *status quo* endured they were isolated from the rest of Europe by an unbroken band of Turkish territory, stretching from the Aegean to the Adriatic Sea ; what was the use of overcoming great engineering difficulties to build a line of European gauge from Athens right up to the northern frontier, if Turkey refused to sanction the construction of the tiny section that must pass through her territory between the Greek railhead and the actual terminus of the European system at Salonika, or if, even supposing she withdrew her veto, she would have it in her power to bring pressure on Greece at any moment by threatening to sever communications along this vital artery ? So long as Turkey was there, Greece was practically an island, and her only communication with continental Europe lay through her ports. But what use to improve the ports, when the recovery of Salonika, the fairest object of the national dreams, would ultimately change the

country's economic centre of gravity, and make her maritime as well as her overland commerce flow along quite other channels than the present ?

Thus the Greek nation's present was overshadowed by its future, and its actions paralysed by its hopes. Perhaps a nation with more power of application and less of imagination would have schooled itself to the thought that these sordid, obtrusive details were the key to the splendours of the future, and would have devoted itself to the systematic amelioration of the cramped area which it had already secured for its own : this is what Bulgaria managed to do in her wonderful generation of internal growth between the Berlin Treaty of 1878 and the declaration of war against Turkey in 1912 ; but Bulgaria, thanks to her geographical situation, was from the outset freer from the tentacles of the Turkish octopus than Greece had contrived to make herself by her fifty years' start, while her temperamentally sober ambitions were not inflamed by such past traditions as Greece had inherited, not altogether to her advantage. Be that as it may, Greece, whether by fault or misfortune, failed to apply herself successfully to the cure of her defects and the exploitation of her assets, though she did not lack leaders strong-minded enough to summon her to the dull business of the present. Her recent history might be expressed as the struggle between the parties of the present and the future, and the prevailing discomfiture of the former is typified in the tragedy of Trikoupis, the best statesman Greece had till Venezelos appeared.

Trikoupis came into power in 1882, just after the country had been given a fresh start by the acquisition of the rich agricultural province of Thessaly, assigned to her by the Treaty of Berlin. There were no such

continuous areas of good arable land within the original limits of the kingdom, and such as there were had been desolated by the twelve years of savage warfare¹ which were the price of liberty. The population had been swept away by wholesale massacres of racial minorities in every district; the dearth of industrious hands had allowed the torrents to play havoc with the cultivation-terraces on the mountain slopes, and the spectre of malaria, always lying in wait for its opportunity, to claim the waterlogged plains for its own. Fifty years had passed, and little attempt had been made to cope with the evil, until now it seemed almost past remedy. If, however, the surface of the land offered little prospect of wealth for the moment, there were considerable treasures to be found beneath it: a metalliferous belt runs down the whole east coast of the Greek mainland, cropping up again in many of the Aegean islands, and some of the ores, of which there is a great variety, are rare and valuable; the lack of transit facilities is partly remedied by the fact that workable veins often lie near enough to the sea for the produce to be carried straight from mine to ship, by an endless-chain system of overhead trolleys; so that, once capital is secured for installing the plant and opening the mine, profitable operations can be carried on irrespective of the general economic condition of the country. Trikoupis saw how much potential wealth was locked up in these mineral seams; the problem was how to attract the capital necessary to tap it. The nucleus round which have accumulated the immense masses of mobilized capital that are the life-blood of modern European industry and commerce, was originally derived from the

¹ 1821-32.

surplus profits of agriculture. But a country that finds itself, like Greece in the nineteenth century, reduced to a state of agricultural bankruptcy, has obviously not saved any surplus in the process, so that it is unable to provide from its own pocket the minimum outlay it so urgently needs in order to open for itself some new activity. If it is to obtain a fresh start on other lines, it must secure the co-operation of the foreign investor, and the capitalist with a ready market for his money will only put it into enterprises where he has some guarantee of its safety. There was little doubt that the minerals of Greece would well repay extraction, the uncertain element was the Greek nation itself. The burning question of national unity might break out at any moment into a blaze of war, and, in the probable case of disaster, involve the whole country and all interests connected with it in economic as well as political ruin. Western Europe would not commit itself to Greek mining enterprise, unless it felt confident that the statesman responsible for the government of Greece would and could restrain his country from its instinctive impulse towards political adventure. The great merit of Trikoupis was that he managed to inspire this confidence. Greece owes most of the wheel-roads, railways, and mines of which she can now boast to the dozen years of his more or less consecutive administration. But the roads are unfinished, the railway-network incomplete, the mines exploited only to a fraction of their capacity, because the forces against Trikoupis were in the end too strong for him. It may be that his eye too rigidly followed the foreign investor's point of view, and that by adopting a more conciliatory attitude towards the national ideal, he might have strengthened his position at home without impairing

his reputation abroad, but his position was really made impossible by a force quite beyond his control, the irresponsible, intolerable course of outrage and breach of engagement which Turkey, under whatever régime, has always pursued towards foreign States, and especially towards those Balkan countries which have won their freedom in her despite, while perforce abandoning a large proportion of their race to continued subjection to Turkish misgovernment.

Several times over the Porte, by wanton insults to Greece, wrecked the efforts of Trikoupis to establish good relations between the two Governments, and played into the hands of the Greek chauvinist party, which was led by Trikoupis' rival, Delyannis. Delyannis' tenures of office were always brief, but during them he contrived to undo most of the work accomplished by Trikoupis in the previous intervals. A particularly tense 'incident' with Turkey put him in power in 1893, with a strong enough backing from the country to warrant a general mobilization, which led to no further result than the ruin of Greek credit. Trikoupis was hastily recalled to office by the king, but too late; he found himself unable to retrieve the ruin, and retired altogether from politics in 1895, dying abroad next year in voluntary exile and enforced disillusionment.

With the removal of Trikoupis from the helm, Greece ran straight upon the rocks: a disastrous war with Turkey was precipitated in 1897 by events in Krete. It brought the immediate *débâcle* of the army and the occupation of Thessaly for a year by Turkish troops, while its final penalties were the cession of the chief strategical positions along the northern frontier and the imposition of an international commission of control

over Greek finance, in view of the national bankruptcy entailed by the war. The fifteen years that followed 1895 were indeed a black period in modern Greek history, yet the time was not altogether lost, and such events as the draining of the Kopais-basin by a British company, and its conversion from a malarious swamp into a rich agricultural area, marked a perceptible economic advance.

This comparative stagnation was broken at last by the Young Turk *pronunciamento* at Salonika in 1908, which produced such momentous repercussions all through the Nearer East. The Young Turks had struck in order to forestall the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, but the opportunity was seized by every restive element within it to shake off, if possible, the Turkish connexion. Just as in 1897, Greece was directly affected by the action of the Greek population in Krete. As a result of the revolt of 1896-7, Krete had been constituted an autonomous State, subject to Ottoman suzerainty, autonomy and suzerainty alike being guaranteed by four Great Powers. Prince George of Greece, a son of the King of the Hellenes, was placed at the head of the autonomous Government as high commissioner, but his autocratic tendency caused great discontent among the free-spirited Kretans, who had not rid themselves of the Turkish régime in order to forfeit their independence again in another fashion. Dissension culminated in 1906, when the leaders of the Opposition took to the mountains, and obtained such support and success in the guerrilla fighting that followed, that they forced Prince George to tender his resignation. He was succeeded as high commissioner by Zaimis, another citizen of the Greek kingdom, who inaugurated a more constitutional régime. In 1908

the Kretans believed that the moment for realizing the national ideal had come; they proclaimed the union with Greece, and elected deputies to the Parliament at Athens. But the guarantor Powers carried out their obligations by promptly sending a combined naval expedition, which hauled down the Greek flag at Canea, and prevented the deputies from embarking for Peiraieus. This seemingly pedantic insistence upon the *status quo* was extremely exasperating to Greek nationalism. It produced a ferment in the kingdom, which grew steadily for nine months, and vented itself in July 1909 in the *coup d'état* of the 'Military League', a second-hand imitation of the Turkish 'Committee of Union and Progress'; the royal family was cavalierly treated, and constitutional government superseded by a junta of officers. But at this point the policy of the four Powers towards Krete was justified. Turkey knew well that she had lost Krete in 1897, but she could still use her suzerainty to prevent Greece from gaining new strength by the annexation of the island. The Young Turks had seized the reins of government, not to modify the policy of the Porte, but to intensify its chauvinism, and they accordingly intimated that they would consider any violation of their suzerain rights over Krete as a case for declaring war upon Greece. Greece, without army or allies, was obviously not in a position to incur another war, and the 'Military League' therefore found that it had reached the end of its tether. There ensued a deadlock of eight months, only enlivened by a naval mutiny, during which the country lay paralysed, with no programme whatsoever before it.

Then the man demanded by the situation appeared unexpectedly from the centre of disturbance, Krete.

Venezelos started life as a successful advocate at Canea ; he entered Kretan politics in the struggle for constitutionalism, and distinguished himself in the successful revolution of 1906, of which he was the soul ; naturally, he became one of the leading statesmen under the new order of things, and he further distinguished himself by resolutely opposing agitation for ' union ' as premature, and yet retaining his hold over a people whose paramount political preoccupation this was. The crisis of 1908-9 brought him into close relations with the Government of the Greek kingdom, and the king, who had gauged his calibre, now took the patriotic step of calling in the man who had expelled his son from Krete, to put his own house in order ; it speaks much for both men that they worked together in harmony from beginning to end. Venezelos, then, exchanged Kretan for Greek citizenship, and took in hand the ' Military League ' ; after short negotiations, he persuaded it to dissolve in favour of a national convention, which was able to meet in March 1910.

Thus Greece became a constitutional country once more, and Venezelos the first premier of the new era ; he has remained in power ever since, and proved himself the good genius of his country. Results speak for themselves, and the remainder of this pamphlet will be little more than a record of his achievements ; but before we pass on to review them, we must say a word about the character to which they are due. In March 1912 the time came for the first general election since Venezelos had taken office. Two years' experience of his administration had already won him such popularity and prestige, that the old party groups, purely personal followings infected with all the corruption, jingoism, and insincerity of the dark fifteen years,

leagued themselves in a desperate effort to cast him out ; corruption on a grand scale was attempted, but Venezelos' success at the polls was sweeping. The writer happened to be spending that month in Krete ; the Kretans had, of course, elected deputies in good time to the Parliament at Athens, and once more the foreign warships stopped them in the act of boarding the steamer for Peiraiæus, while Venezelos, who was still responsible for the Greek Government till the new Parliament met, had declared with characteristic frankness that the attendance of the Kretan deputies could not possibly be sanctioned, an opening his opponents did not fail to take advantage of. Meanwhile, every one in Krete was awaiting news of the polling in the kingdom. They might have been expected to feel, at any rate, lukewarmly towards a man who had actually taken office on the programme of deferring their cherished ' union ' indefinitely ; instead, they greeted his triumph with enormous enthusiasm. Their feeling was explained by the comment of an innkeeper : ' Venezelos ! ' he said : ' Why, he is a man who can say " No " ; he won't stand any nonsense ; if you try to get round him, he'll put you in irons ', and he had clearly hit the mark. Venezelos has done well, because he is a clever man with an excellent power of judgement, but acuteness is a common Greek virtue ; he has done brilliantly, because he has the added touch of genius required to make the Greek take ' No ' for an answer, a quality, very rare indeed in the nation, which explains Venezelos' success in contrast to Trikoupis' failure. Greece has been fortunate indeed in finding the right man at the crucial hour.

In the winter of 1911-12 and the succeeding summer, the foreign traveller met innumerable results of

Venezelos' activity in every part of the country, and all gave evidence of the same thing: sanity of decision, followed up by inflexibility of execution. For instance, a resident in Greece, who four years before had made an expedition into the wild country north-west of the Gulf of Patras, had needed the attendance of an escort of soldiers, on account of the number of criminals 'wanted' by the Government who were lurking in that region as outlaws. An inquiry about this danger, made upon landing in the district in August, 1912, was met with a smile: 'O, yes, it was so,' said the gendarme, 'but since then we have had Venezelos; he amnestied every one "out" for minor offences, and then caught the "bad ones", so there are no outlaws in Akarnania now', and he spoke the truth; you could wander all about the forests and mountains without molestation.

So far Venezelos had devoted himself to internal reconstruction, after the fashion of Trikoupis, but he was not the man to desert the national idea. The army and navy were reorganized by French and British missions, and when the opportunity appeared, he was ready to take full advantage of it. In the autumn of 1912, Turkey had been for a year at war with Italy; her finances had suffered a heavy drain, and the Italian command of the sea not only locked up her best troops in Tripoli, but interrupted several important lines of communication between her Asiatic and European provinces, for instance, the direct route by sea from Smyrna to Salonika, and the devious sea-passage thence round Greece to Skodra, which was the only alternative for Turkish troops to running the gauntlet of the Albanian mountaineers. Clearly the Balkan nations could find no better moment for striking the blow to settle that implacable 'preliminary question'

of national unity which had dogged them all since their birth. Their only chance of success, however, was to strike in concert, for Turkey, handicapped though she was, could still easily outmatch them singly; unless they could compromise between their conflicting claims, they would have to let the grand opportunity for making them good slip by altogether.

Of the four States concerned, two, Serbia and Montenegro, were of the same Southern-Slav nationality, and had been drawn into complete accord with each other since the formal annexation of Bosnia by Austria-Hungary in 1908, which struck a hard blow at their common national idea, while neither of them had any differences with Greece, because the Greek and Southern-Slav nationalities are at no point geographically contiguous. With Bulgaria, a nation of Slavonic speech and culture, though not wholly of Slavonic origin, Serbia had quarrelled for years over the ultimate destiny of the Uskub district, in North-western Macedonia, still subject to Turkey; but in the summer of 1912 the two States adjusted in a secret treaty their conflicting territorial claims, and agreed to refer the fate of one debatable strip to the arbitration of Russia, after the close of their already projected war with Turkey. By far the most formidable feud, however, was that between Bulgaria and Greece; the two nationalities are continuous over a very wide extent of territory, stretching from the Black Sea on the east to the Lake of Okhrida, in the interior of Albania, on the west, and there is at no point a sharp dividing line between them. The Greek element tends to predominate towards the coast and the Bulgarian towards the interior, but there are broad zones where Greek and Bulgarian villages are inextricably interspersed, while purely Greek towns

are often isolated in the midst of purely Bulgarian rural districts. Even if the racial areas could be plotted out on a large-scale map, it was clear that no political frontier could be drawn to follow their convolutions, and that Greece and Bulgaria could only divide the spoils by making up their minds to give and take. The actual lines this necessary compromise would follow, obviously depended on the degree of the Allies' success against Turkey in the common war that was yet to be fought, and Venezelos rose to the occasion. He had the courage to offer Bulgaria the Greek alliance without stipulating for any definite minimum share in the common conquests, and the tact to induce her to accept it on the same terms. Greece and Bulgaria agreed to shelve all territorial questions till the war had been brought to a successful close; and with the negotiation of this understanding (another case in which Venezelos succeeded where Trikoupis had attempted and failed) the Balkan League was complete.

The events that followed are common knowledge. The Allies opened the campaign in October, and the Turks collapsed before an impetuous attack. The Bulgarians crumpled up the Turkish field armies in Thrace by the terrific battle of Lule Burgas; the Serbians disposed of their armies in the Macedonian interior, while the Greeks effected a junction with the Serbians from the south, and cut their way through to Salonika. Within two months of the declaration of war the Turkish land forces were driven out of the open altogether behind the shelter of the Chataldja and Gallipoli lines, and only three fortresses—Adrianople, Yannina, and Skodra—held out further to the west; while their navy, closely blockaded by the Greek fleet within the Dardanelles, had to look on passively

at the successive occupation of the Aegean Islands by Greek landing-parties. With the winter came negotiations, during which an armistice reigned at Adrianople and Skodra, while the Greeks pursued the siege of Yannina and the Dardanelles blockade. The negotiations proved abortive, and the result of the renewed hostilities justified the action of the Balkan plenipotentiaries in breaking them off. By the spring of 1913, the three fortresses had fallen, and in the treaty finally signed at London, Turkey ceded to the Balkan League, as a whole, all her European territories west of a line drawn from Ainos on the Aegean to Midia on the Black Sea, including Adrianople and the whole lower basin of the River Maritsa.

The time had now come for Greece and Bulgaria to settle their account, and the unexpected extent of the common gains ought to have facilitated their division. The territory in question included the whole north coast of the Aegean and its immediate hinterland, and Venezelos proposed to consider it in two sections: (1) The eastern section, conveniently known as Thrace, consisted of the lower basin of the Maritsa. As far as Adrianople the population was Bulgarian, but south of that city it was succeeded by a Greek element, with a considerable sprinkling of Turkish settlements, as far as the sea; geographically, however, the whole district was intimately connected with Bulgaria, and the railway that follows the course of the Maritsa down to the port of Dedeagatch, offered a much-needed economic outlet for large regions already within the Bulgarian frontier. Venezelos, then, was prepared to resign all Greek claims to the eastern section, in return for corresponding concessions by Bulgaria in the west. (2) The western section, consisting of the lower basins

of the Vardar and Struma, lay in the immediate neighbourhood of the former frontier of Greece, but the Greek population of Salonika¹ and the coast-districts east of it, could not be brought within the Greek frontier without including as well a certain hinterland inhabited mainly by Bulgarians. The cession of this was the return asked for by Venezelos, and he reduced it to a minimum by abstaining from pressing the quite well-founded claims of Greece in the Monastir district, which lay further inland still.

But Venezelos' conciliatory proposals met with no response from the Bulgarian Government, which was in an 'all or nothing' mood. It swallowed Venezelos' gift of Thrace, and then proceeded to use the Bulgarian hinterland of Salonika as a pretext for demanding the latter city as well. This uncompromising attitude made agreement impossible, and it was aggravated by the aggressive action of the Bulgarian troops in the occupied territory, who persistently endeavoured to steal ground from the Greek forces facing them. In May there was serious fighting to the east of the Struma, and peace was only restored with great difficulty. Bulgarian relations with Serbia were becoming strained at the same time, though in this case Bulgaria had more justice on her side. Serbia maintained that the veto imposed by Austria upon her expansion to the Adriatic, together with Bulgaria's unexpected gains on the Maritsa, invalidated the secret treaty of the previous summer, and announced her intention of retaining a part of the Monastir district and the whole of the Salonika railway as far as the rectified Greek

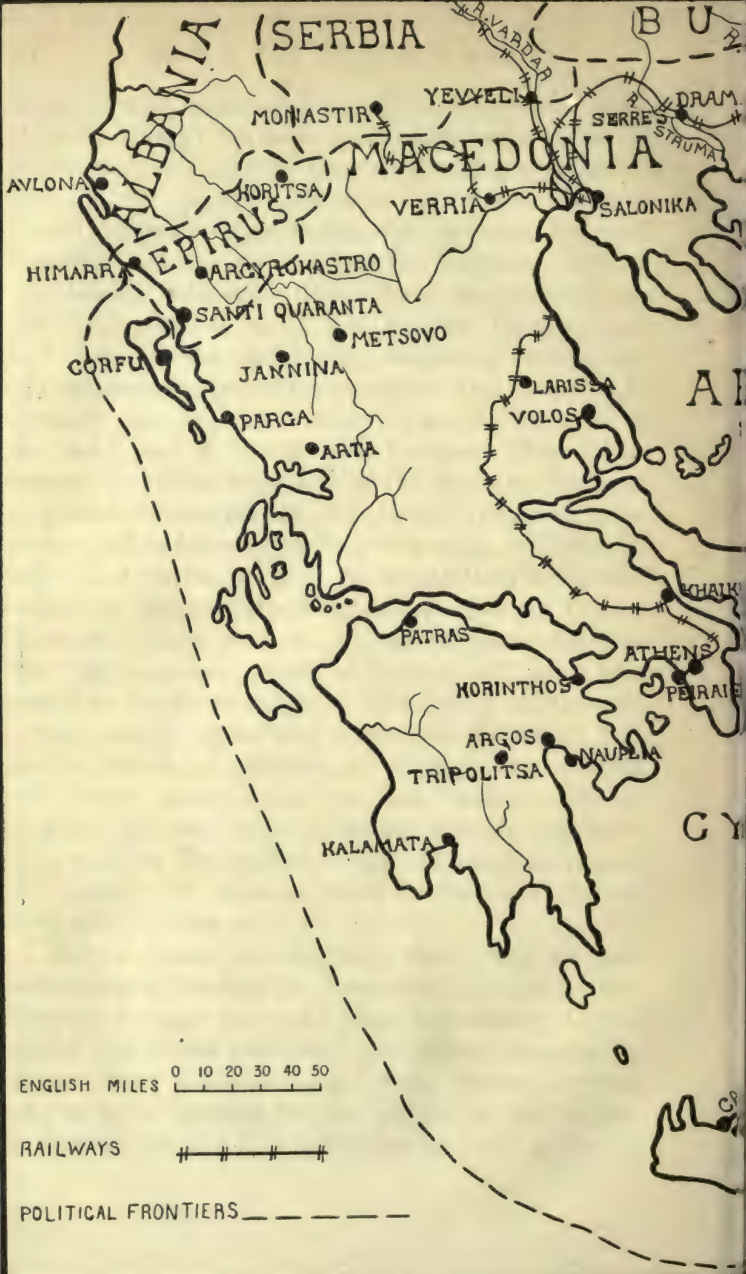
¹ The predominant element in the population of Salonika itself is neither Greek nor Bulgarian, but consists of about 80,000 Spanish-speaking Jews, settled there as refugees in the sixteenth century.

frontier. Bulgaria, on the other hand, shut her eyes to Serbia's necessity for an untrammelled economic outlet, and took her stand on her strictest legal treaty-rights. However the balance of justice inclined, a lasting settlement could only have been reached by mutual forbearance and goodwill, but Bulgaria put herself hopelessly in the wrong by a treacherous night-attack, at the end of June 1913, against both her allies all along the line. This unpardonable act was the work of a single political party, which has since been condemned by most sections of Bulgarian public opinion ; but the punishment, if not the responsibility, for the crime fell upon the whole nation. Greece and Serbia had already been drawn into an understanding by their common danger ; they now declared war against Bulgaria in concert ; the counter-strokes of their armies met with success, and the intervention of Roumania made Bulgaria's discomfiture certain.

The results of the one month's war were registered in the Treaty of Bukarest. Many of its provisions are unhappily, though naturally, inspired by the spirit of revenge, but Greece, at any rate, showed a statesmanlike self-restraint in the negotiations. Venezelos followed the course of taking no more after the war than he had asked before it : he was content to accept the River Mesta as the eastward limit of Greek expansion, and still conceded to Bulgaria the strip of coast beyond it, with the harbours of Porto Lagos and Dedeagatch, which had been occupied during hostilities by the Greek fleet. Thus he satisfied Bulgaria's need for an Aegean outlet, and cleverly saved Greece for the future from those drawbacks involved in immediate contact with Turkish territory, which she had so often experienced in the past. Only Venezelos' prestige could have carried

through such a moderate policy in the exasperated state of public feeling ; but its fruit may well be the definitive settlement of the quarrel between Greece and Bulgaria. Bulgaria at present cherishes resentment against Greece ; first, because Greece has defeated her, and secondly, because she has lost the Bulgarian population behind Salonika without being compensated by the Greek districts of Thrace, for the Turks slipped back into Adrianople during Bulgaria's prostration, and have managed so far to stay there. But geographical necessity will doubtless restore Thrace to Bulgaria in the end ; and if the present European War brings freedom to all the fragments of the Southern-Slav race at present imprisoned in the Austro-Hungarian complexus, and is followed by their federation with Montenegro and Serbia, it is to be hoped that Serbia will restore to Bulgaria the Bulgarian districts of Central Macedonia, since outlets less distant than Salonika from her economic centre of gravity will have been opened to her on the Adriatic. The Treaty of Bukarest, in fact, simply aggravated instead of alleviating Bulgaria's quarrels with Serbia and Turkey ; but if in the near future events occur to heal these unstanched wounds, Bulgaria's national health will thereby be in such measure restored that the outstanding friction with Greece will be more likely to die away than to chafe into an open sore.

There is reason to prophesy, then, that the new north-eastern frontier of Greece will be permanent, whatever changes may take place immediately beyond it, and this means that the ' preliminary question ' of national unity is substantially solved. Before, however, we pass on to consider the new chapter of history that is opening for the Greek nation, we must glance at





certain minor problems that remain, because they have a considerable bearing upon the present European situation.

The integrity of a land frontier is guaranteed by the whole strength of the nation which it bounds, and can only be modified by crises affecting the totality of the national life, but islands by their geographical nature constitute independent political units, easily detached from or incorporated with larger groupings, according to the fluctuating phases in the rivalry of sea-power. Thus it happened that the arrival of the *Goeben* and the *Breslau* at the Dardanelles led Turkey to reopen promptly certain questions of the Aegean. The islands in this sea are uniformly Greek in population, but their respective geographical positions and political fortunes differentiate them into several groups :

1. The Cyclades in the south-west, half submerged vanguards of the continental ranges of Greece herself, have formed part of the modern kingdom since its birth, and their status has never since been called in question.

2. Krete, the largest of all the Greek islands, enjoyed, as we have seen, autonomy under Turkish suzerainty for fifteen years before the Balkan War ; at its outbreak she at once proclaimed her union with Greece, and her action was legalized when Turkey expressly abandoned her suzerain rights in a clause of the Treaty of London.

3. During the war itself, the Greek navy occupied a number of islands still directly under the government of Turkey ; the parties to the London Treaty agreed to leave their destiny to the decision of the Powers, and the latter assigned them all to Greece, with the exception of Imbros and Tenedos, which command strategically the mouth of the Dardanelles.

The islands thus secured to Greece fall in turn into several sub-groups. Two of these are (a) Thasos, Samothraki, and Lemnos, off the European coast, and (b) Samos and its satellite Nikarià, immediately off the west coast of Anatolia.

These five islands seem definitely to have been given up by Turkey for lost. The European group is well beyond the range of her present frontiers, while Samos, though it adjoins the Turkish mainland, does not mask the outlet from any considerable port, and has also for many years possessed an autonomous status similar to that of Krete, so that the Ottoman Government did not acutely feel its final severance.

(c) A third group consists of Mitylini and Khios,¹ and the views of Greece and Turkey concerning this pair have so far proved irreconcilable. The Turks point out that the coast off which these islands lie contains not only the most essential ports of Anatolia, but also the largest enclaves of Greek population on the Turkish mainland, and they declare that occupation of this group by Greece menaces the sovereignty of the Porte in its home territory. 'See', they say, 'how the two islands flank both sides of the sea-passage to Smyrna, the terminus of all the railways which penetrate the Anatolian interior, while Mitylini stifles Aivali and Edremid as well. As soon as the Greek Government has converted the harbours of these islands into naval bases, the Greek fleet will be able to maintain a virtual blockade of Anatolia, and the pressure thus applied to the whole Turkish nation will be reinforced by simultaneous propaganda among the disloyal Greek elements in our midst.' Accordingly

¹ Including its satellite Psara.

the Turks refuse to recognize the award of the Powers, and demand the restoration of Ottoman sovereignty over Mitylini and Khios, promising in return to grant them autonomy after the precedent of Krete and Samos. To these arguments and demands the Greeks reply that, next to Krete, these are the two largest, most wealthy, and most populous Greek islands in the Aegean; that their inhabitants ardently desire union with the national kingdom; and that the Greek Government would hardly use them as a basis for economic coercion and nationalist propaganda against Turkey, because the commerce of Anatolia is in the hands precisely of the Greek element in the country. Greek interests are accordingly bound up with the economic prosperity and political consolidation of Turkey in Asia, and the Anatolian Greeks would merely be alienated from their compatriots by any such impolitic machinations. 'Greek sovereignty over Mitylini and Khios', the Greeks maintain, 'does not threaten Turkey's position on the Continent. But their abandonment to Turkish suzerainty would most seriously endanger the liberty of their populations; for Turkey's promises of autonomy, without the intervention of external powers to keep her to them, are notoriously valueless.'

The irreconcilability of these respective attitudes seems to lie in the fact that each Power requires the other to leave vital national interests at the mercy of an ancient enemy, but is not prepared to make any corresponding sacrifices itself. The difficulty could perhaps be solved by the intervention of some disinterested third party strong enough to guarantee on the one hand that Greece should not fortify the two islands, and on the other that Greek sovereignty over them should not be imperilled by their defenceless

condition. Such a guarantee could only be offered by a concert of Europe. The need for such a guarantee illustrates the necessity of ending the present war in such a manner that an effective concert of the Powers shall once more become possible.

4. There remains for consideration a fourth group of Greek islands, which formerly belonged to Turkey, but are now in the hands of other European Powers.

(a) Italy, during her war with Turkey over Tripoli, had seized the group off the south-west corner of Anatolia known as the Sporades, of which Rhodes is the largest member, and in the autumn of 1912 she stipulated, by the Treaty of Lausanne, that she should retain them as a pledge till Turkey had withdrawn her last soldier from Tripoli, when they should be made over again to the Porte. Whatever steps Turkey may have taken, Italy has not so far considered that the time for carrying out her side of the contract has arrived; instead, she has begun to talk of railway concessions in the Adalia district of south-western Anatolia as the indispensable compensation for an ultimate evacuation of the Sporades. There is no objection to such a concession being negotiated, for it would be to the mutual advantage of both States. Italy needs to find unexploited areas for her enterprise, and Turkey to attract unoccupied capital into her undeveloped provinces. But whatever private arrangements Italy and Turkey may make, the Sporades ought, as a matter of national justice, to pass definitively not to Turkey but to Greece. If it is true that the achievement of European peace depends on the resettlement of European frontiers upon a national basis, the destination of the Sporades should incidentally obtain the attention of the conference that meets after the close of the present war.

(b) The outlying section of the Greek nation that inhabits the large island of Cyprus in the Eastern Mediterranean has been subject to British government since the Treaty of Berlin (1878) consigned the island to Great Britain on similar conditions to those under which Italy holds the Sporades by the Treaty of Lausanne. We occupy it without prejudice to the sovereignty of the Porte for so long a period as Kars shall remain in Russia's hands. Meanwhile it has become clear that the incorporation of Kars in the Russian Empire is final, and that the condition involving our evacuation of Cyprus will, therefore, never arise, but we are still not at liberty to transfer its ownership to any other Power but Turkey. Great Britain has just declared (Nov. 5) that the Berlin Treaty is cancelled as the result of Turkey's intervention in the present war; it is to be hoped that Great Britain will announce an intention of ultimately allowing Cyprus to unite itself with Greece. The whole population of the island is Greek in language; under an excellent British administration its political consciousness has been awakened, and has expressed itself in a growing desire of the Christian majority to realize its nationality. It is true that in Cyprus, as in Krete, there is a considerable Greek-speaking minority of Moslems¹ that prefers the *status quo*, but since the barrier of language is absent, their antipathy to union may not prove permanent. However important the retention of Cyprus may be to Great Britain from the strategical point of view, we shall find that even in the balance of material interests it is not worth the price of alienating the sympathy of a united nationality.

¹ In Cyprus about 22 per cent.

This rather detailed review of the island problems brings out the fact that Greek nationalism is not an artificial conception of theorists, but a real force which impels all fragments of Greek-speaking population to make sustained efforts towards political union within the national state ; the most striking example of this attractive power is afforded by the problem of ' Epirus '.¹ The Epirots are a population of Albanian race, and they still speak an Albanian dialect in their homes, while the women and children, at any rate, often know no other language. But somewhat over a century ago the political organism created by the remarkable personality of Ali Pasha in the hinterland of the Adriatic coast, and the relations into which Great Britain and France, in their struggle for the Mediterranean, were drawn with the new principality, awakened in the Epirots a desire for civilization. Their Albanian origin opened to them no prospects, for the race had neither a literature nor a common historical tradition ; and they accordingly turned to the Greeks, with whom they were linked in religion by membership of the Orthodox Church, and in politics by subjection to Ali's Government at Yannina, which employed Greek as its official language. They had appealed to the right quarter, for Greek culture under the Turkish yoke had accumulated a store of latent energy, which converted itself into a vigorous national revival during the eighteenth century. The partially successful War of Liberation in the 'twenties of the nineteenth century was only one manifestation of the new life ; it has expressed itself more typically in a universal enthusiasm

¹ The name applied to the districts of Himarra, Argyrokastro, and Koritsa.

for education, which has opened to individual Greeks commercial and professional careers of the greatest brilliance, and often led them to spend the fortunes so acquired in endowing the nation with further educational facilities. Public spirit is a Greek virtue ; there are few villages which do not possess monuments of their successful sons, and a school is an even commoner gift than a church, while the State has supplemented the individual benefactor to an extent remarkable where public resources are so slender. The school-house, in fact, is generally the most prominent and substantial building in a Greek village, and the gains which their alliance with the Greek nation have brought to the Epirots are symbolized by Greek schools now established in generous numbers throughout their country. For the Epirot boy the school is the door to the future ; the language he learns there makes him the member of a nation, and opens to him a world wide enough to employ all the talent and energy he may possess, if he seeks his fortune at Patras or Peiraieus, or in the great Greek commercial communities of Alexandria and Constantinople, while if he stays at home it still affords him a link with the life of civilized Europe through the medium of the ubiquitous Greek newspaper.¹ The Epirot, then, has become Greek in soul ; he reached the conception of a national life more liberal than the isolated existence of his native village through the avenue of Greek culture, so that ' Hellenism ' and nationality have become for him identical ideas, and when at last the hour of deliverance struck, he welcomed the Greek armies that marched into his

¹ There is still practically no matter printed in the Albanian language.

country from the south and the east after the fall of Yannina in the spring of 1913, with the same enthusiasm with which all the other enslaved fragments of the Greek nation greeted the consummation of a century's hopes.

The Greek troops arrived only just in time, for the 'Hellenism' of the Epirots had been terribly proved by murderous attacks from their Moslem neighbours on the north. These last speak a variety of the same Albanian tongue, but are differentiated by a creed which assimilates them to the ruling race. They are superior to their Christian kinsmen in numbers and by the possession of arms, which under the Ottoman régime were the monopoly of the Moslem. Now, however, the oppression seemed to be overpast, and the Greek occupation to be a harbinger of security for the future. Unluckily, Epirus was of interest to others besides its own inhabitants; it occupies an important geographical position facing the extreme heel of Italy, just below the narrowest point in the neck of the Adriatic, and the Italian Government insisted that the country should be included in the new autonomous Albanian principality, which the Powers had reserved the right to delimit in concert by a provision in the Treaty of London. Italy gave two reasons for her demand. First, she declared it incompatible with her own vital interests that both shores of the strait between Corfù and the mainland should pass into the hands of the same Power, because the combination of both coasts and the channel between them offered a site for a naval base that could dominate the mouth of the Adriatic. Secondly, she maintained that the native Albanian speech of the Epirots proved their Albanian nationality, and that it was unjust to the

new Albanian nation to deprive it of its most prosperous and civilized section. Neither argument, however, is cogent; the first could be met by the neutralization of the Corfù straits,¹ under such a guarantee as we have proposed for Mitylini and Khios; it is also considerably weakened by the fact that the really commanding position on the eastern side of the Adriatic's mouth is not the Corfù channel outside the narrows, but the magnificent bay of Avlona just within them, a port of Moslem population to which the Epirots have never laid claim, and which would therefore in any case fall within the Albanian frontier. The second argument is almost ludicrous: the destiny of Epirus is not primarily the concern of the other Albanians, or for that matter of the Greeks, but of the Epirots themselves, and it is hard to see how their nationality can be defined except in terms of their own conscious and expressed desire, for a nation is simply a group of men desirous of organizing themselves for certain purposes, and can be brought into existence not by any specific external factors, but solely by the inward will of its members. It was a travesty of justice to put the Orthodox Epirots at the mercy of a Moslem majority (which had been massacring them the year before), on the ground that they happened to speak the same language. The hardship was aggravated by the fact that all the routes connecting Epirus with the outer world run through Yannina and Salonika, from which the new frontier sundered her, while there are great natural barriers between Koritsà and Avlona or Durazzo, with which the same frontier artificially banded her.

¹ Corfù itself may not be fortified, by the agreement under which Great Britain transferred the Ionian Islands to Greece in 1863.

The award of the Powers roused great indignation in Greece, but Venezelos was strong enough to secure that it should be scrupulously respected; and the 'correct attitude' which he inflexibly maintained has finally won its reward. As soon as the decision of the Powers was announced, the Epirots determined to help themselves; they raised a militia, and asserted their independence so successfully, that they compelled the Prince of Wied, the first (and perhaps the last) ruler of the new 'Albania' to give them home rule in matters of police and education, and to recognize Greek as the official language for Epirus. They ensured observance of this compact by the maintenance of their troops under arms. So matters continued, until a rebellion among his Moslem subjects and the outbreak of the European War obliged the prince to depart, leaving Albania to its natural state of anarchy. The anarchy might have restored every canton and village to the old state of contented isolation, were it not for the religious hatred between the Moslems and the Epirots, which, with the removal of all external control, has vented itself in an aggressive warfare of the former against the latter, and has already entailed much suffering.

These events have put Epirus in urgent need of reoccupation by Greek troops, unless the prosperity is to be utterly ruined; and when Venezelos informed the Powers a few days ago¹ of his resolve to take this step provisionally, the confidence he has justly won prevented even Italy from taking any exception, though she is proceeding to establish herself on a similar understanding at Avlona. It is to be hoped that the simultaneous presence of Italian and Greek authorities in

¹ October 1914.

Avlona and Epirus respectively, will lead to an understanding between the two countries, if indeed an understanding has not already been effected ; the adjustment of their interests in this quarter ought not to prove difficult, and the adequate recognition of Epirus' necessities and desires would be one of its most satisfactory fruits.

The case of Epirus is a good example of what Greek nationalism has meant during the last century. Western Europeans are apt to depreciate modern 'Hellenism', because the reference to a vanished glory implied in its ambitious title involves it in an atmosphere of unreality ; but the Hellenism of to-day, though it is the heir of ancient Greek culture in hardly more direct a sense than is the whole of modern European civilization, has yet a genuine vitality of its own. It displays a power of assimilating alien elements to an active participation in its ideals, and its allegiance supplants all others in the hearts of those exposed to its charm. The Epirots are not the only Albanians who have been Hellenized ; in the heart of the kingdom there are enclaves, the result of successive migrations from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century, which have entirely forgotten their origin, so that the villagers when questioned can only say, 'We are Greeks like every one else, but we happen to speak Albanian.' The Vlachs of Akarnania, a Romance-speaking tribe of nomad shepherds, are in process of settling down to an agricultural, village life, so that Hellenism for them expresses a rise in standard, while their still migratory brothers in Pindus, further north, are already 'Hellenes' in political sympathy ;¹ even in distant Cappa-

¹ The cruiser *Georgios Averof*, which decided the Greek naval supremacy in 1912-13, was given to the nation by a Vlach millionaire who had made his fortune at Alexandria.

docia, the region at the root of the Anatolian peninsula, the Christian Greek population, which has been partially submerged by the Turkish flood for eight hundred years, till its native speech is reduced to a mere vocabulary, bedded upon a Turkish syntax, has been reached just in time by the new current of national life, bringing with it education, and thereby a community of outlook with Greeks the world over, so that the almost extinct Greek element will now revive to play its independent part in the Turkish state of the future. In an integral portion of the Greek world like Krete, the desire for union was passionate: 'Aren't you better off as you are?' travellers inquired during the era of autonomy. 'If you get your "Union", you will have to do two years' military service instead of one year's training in the militia, and to pay taxes half as heavy again.' 'We have thought of that,' the Kretans would reply, 'but what does it matter, if we are united with Greece?'

But a national ideal, however attractive by its mere sincerity, is only justified by its positive content. Now that the 'preliminary question' is solved, and the Greek nation has found itself, what are the fruits by which it will become known in the future? Will it settle down to the task, so long delayed, of developing its material civilization? Or will the fever of nationalism prove itself a habit too confirmed for cure? Like Thessaly, the new territories in the north will greatly augment the nation's economic assets, for they include most of the areas that produce the 'Turkish' tobacco as well as large pine-forests in Pindus, which, if judiciously exploited, will go far to remedy the present deficiency of home-grown timber, though they will not provide quantities sufficient for foreign export.

Greece, indeed, owing to the smallness of her extent and her lack of geographical homogeneity, will never produce staple commodities for export wholesale, but will depend on special products, such as the rare ores of her eastern mountains, the tobacco of her northern river-basins, and the currant crop raised on the rich patches of Peloponnesian plain-land, while industry and scientific methods might improve some of her wines to a standard which would bring them into the world-market. Such will be the peculiar sources of Greek prosperity, but the ultimate economic future of the country lies in co-operation with her neighbours in a grouping wider than the political atom of the national State. South-eastern Europe contains many nationalities inextricably entangled, but economically it forms a single and indivisible unit; it has a common character as the region upon which the manufactures of Central Europe will become increasingly dependent for their raw materials, and which will provide an expanding market for the latter region's finished products; its various parts are linked together by arteries of commerce that take no account of political frontiers. Unity of economic interest ought sooner or later to find expression in a zollverein, if the region is to reach the highest development of which it is capable. The zollverein in turn ought to lead on to a political understanding of at least a passive kind, seeing that all the nations within the region have likewise in common the strongest interest in keeping extraneous powers at arm's length.

The aim of Greek statesmen, in fact, should be the renewal, on a broader basis and a more permanent footing, of that Balkan League which Bulgaria's action shattered in the spring of 1913. Some spectators of

recent events may hold this suggestion to be Utopian, and may argue that in the Balkans, at any rate, if not throughout Europe, the sinister force of national antagonism will be strong enough to baulk all international ideals, even if the price of its triumph be the common ruin of its votaries. But there is one potent assimilative influence equally at work among all the nationalities of the Balkans, which gives good hope for the future: during the last dozen years unskilled labour from every country in Europe south-east of Vienna has been pouring into the United States. The remoter the village, the smaller the openings for the employment of its surplus labour, the larger swarm of emigrants does it send across the Atlantic. The adventurers do not stay permanently in America: after four years at most they succumb to home-sickness, and as you travel over the land you are always running unexpectedly against the 'American', with his well-shaven face and goodly clothes and boots, back for a year to spend his earnings among his own folk. The emigrant to America does not lose his patriotism: he returns without fail to serve his nationality in war; but he brings back with him a faculty for criticizing it from a wider standpoint.

The return for which he longed during his exile is often a disillusionment to him when he achieves it, and he sets out for America again with a conviction in his heart of the superiority of American efficiency to the dirt and muddle in which he had so complacently grown to manhood in his native country. Whether America or Europe will finally claim him for its own it is as yet too early to predict, for the movement is still in its first stages, and few even of its pioneers can yet have passed middle life; but in any event the effect of their

continued passage to and fro will be momentous: the process is taking place on an enormous scale, and is endowing the Balkans with the very things they need: with the capital for the exploitation of their material resources,¹ and with the spirit of enterprise. America is educating the Balkan peasant to do for himself what he has so far looked to the European speculator to do for him, and this education, in contrast to the 'classical' culture of the Hellenist, which accentuates nationalism by learned memories of the past, is transcending nationalism. It starts from the bottom of society and is awakening the vast uncultured majority to a new-born hope for the future. We are here in presence of one of the most interesting tendencies of the present age: we can look forward with greater expectations to the new chapter that is opening in the history of Greece, now we see that she has found a new spirit to inform it; the 'Hellenism' that inspired the nineteenth century will insensibly yield place to the 'Americanism' that is destined to be the characteristic of the twentieth; and the nation is fortunate indeed in entering upon this critical phase of transition under the guidance of a political genius, Venezelos.

¹ In 1912 the flow of remittances from emigrants in America to their families at home had already sent up the cost of living in Greece; or, in other words, had raised the material standard of civilization.

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NORTH SLESWICK UNDER PRUSSIAN RULE

1864-1914

AN Englishman who had seen the war of 1864, in which Denmark was attacked by the powerful States of Austria and Prussia and compelled to surrender the Duchies of Sleswick, Lauenburg, and Holstein, commented on the Treaty of Vienna (October 30, 1864), by which Denmark acknowledged her defeat, in the following prophetic words :—

This is the result and the reward of Austro-Prussian policy ; it is unjust to the weaker side, grossly inconsistent with the obligations of the stronger. When time shall have brought about a state of things more favourable to Denmark than has existed through 1864, when perchance the oppressed Danish nationality of Sleswick shall be rescued from alien tyrants, then, if this Treaty of Vienna should be used as evidence against the Danes, let Englishmen remember what it is, and how it was obtained.

Under the treaty Denmark had to cede not only the German Duchies of Holstein and Lauenburg, which were members of the German Confederation, but also the ancient Danish borderland of Sleswick, or South Jutland, to give it the name preferred by the Danes. The Holsteiners had expected that, as a result of the treaty, they would be formed into an independent German State of 'Schleswig-Holstein'. But these hopes were not fulfilled either in 1864, or when Austria and

Prussia had gone to war (1866) over the Duchies, among other questions, and Austria had been beaten by her rival. The reason which Austria and Prussia had given for attacking Denmark was that they regarded the Duke of Augustenborg as the lawful heir to the Duchies. Austria and the smaller States of the German Confederation had honestly supported the Augustenborg claim. For Bismarck, who already controlled Prussian policy, this claim was only a stalking-horse. It was reduced to a dead letter by the decision at which the Prussian law-officers arrived in 1865. The question which Bismarck submitted to them was this: Who was the rightful heir to the Duchies after the death (1863) of Frederick VII, the last Danish king of the House of Oldenburg? The two claimants were Christian IX, who had succeeded Frederick on the Danish throne, and the Duke of Augustenborg. The lawyers decided in favour of Christian IX. But, by the Treaty of Vienna, he had ceded all his rights in the Duchies to Austria and Prussia. Hence, in 1865, these two Powers practically partitioned the Duchies. After the Austro-Prussian War of 1866 they were entirely annexed by Prussia.

Thus the Holsteiners and the Germans of South Sleswick saw their dream of independence annihilated; and the Danish element in Sleswick was handed over to the tender mercies of Prussian bureaucracy and militarism. At the date of the Treaty of Vienna the Duchy of Sleswick possessed a population of about 400,000 souls, distributed as follows: some 190,000 in North Sleswick, 150,000 in South Sleswick, 60,000 in the central district. A census taken in 1855 had shown that of this population there were 190,000 who spoke German only, 150,000 who spoke Danish only, while the remainder were bilingual. But then, as now, the

language of daily life was not altogether an infallible test of political sympathies. This was particularly the case in Central Sleswick, where the population had either lost all interest in Danish nationality or were in favour of an independent 'Schleswig-Holstein' which should be included in the German Confederation. The principal town of Central Sleswick was Flensburg; in 1864 the inhabitants were on the whole German-speaking—a state of things which has changed in the past fifty years—and yet were Danish in their sympathies. The exact opposite was the case with Tönder, a town in the west of Central Sleswick.

Flensburg and Tönder are connected by a railway, and it is to the north of this line that the present Danish population of Sleswick, numbering about 150,000 souls, is concentrated. It is Danish not only in the sense that it speaks the Danish language; its members regard themselves as compatriots of the Danes of Denmark. The frontier which was drawn between Denmark and the Duchies in 1864 is an unnatural frontier. It does not correspond to the distribution of the Danish and German nationalities.

These expatriated Danes are largely yeoman farmers; but there are also the tradesmen and the artisans of the small towns of Haderslev, Aabenraa, and Sønderborg. The whole population holds its own in the face of opponents who have steadily become more powerful, and of a calculated policy of oppression which is now far more severe than it was fifty years ago. Prussia vanquished Denmark after a campaign of some four months. But the battle against Danish nationalism in Sleswick has been proceeding from that time to the present; and in this battle the aggressors are further off from victory than they ever were.

The early years of Prussian rule in Sleswick were a period of transition; the final destiny of the Duchy was still undecided. Bismarck was chiefly occupied in thwarting the hopes of the 'Schleswig-Holstein' party; and during 1865 the rule of the Prussian police over North Sleswick was comparatively mild. Bismarck carried his policy of favouring the Danish population to such a point that he caused the local official gazette to publish the following declaration:—

The oppression of the Danish nationality in North Sleswick would be not only unjust, but also extremely impolitic, because it would produce a constant agitation among the inhabitants, and would have the necessary result of causing the North Sleswickers to turn their gaze continually towards the north; they would lose their sympathy with the Duchies, and would maintain their friendly feeling towards Denmark.

In fact, the 'Schleswig-Holsteiners' were told that they would only frustrate their cherished hopes if they endeavoured to germanize their Danish fellow citizens. Very different was the tone which Prussia adopted when both elements in Sleswick, the Danish and the German, had definitely been brought under her rule.

While the 'Schleswig-Holsteiners' saw their last hopes fade with the Austrian defeat in 1866, the Danes gained a definite promise in the Treaty of Prague, 1866, a promise which, though never carried out and cancelled in 1878, still forms the Magna Charta of the Danes in North Sleswick.

By the fifth article of this treaty, inserted on the suggestion of Napoleon III, the population of the northern districts of Sleswick should be ceded to Denmark, when it expressed the desire of a union with Denmark by means of a free vote.

Soon afterwards the Danes had an opportunity granted them of a 'rehearsal' of such a referendum. This was afforded by the elections of 1867 to the Constituent Assembly of the North German Federation and to the North German Reichstag.

At the first of these elections 27,488 Danish against 39,593 German votes were registered in the whole of Sleswick; Flensburg and the other towns, except Tönder in the northern part, showed a Danish majority; and many districts of the south showed Danish minorities.

On the second occasion the votes were 25,598 against 24,664; but though the Danes had been able to return two candidates at the previous election, their present majority only secured the election of one Danish candidate against three Germans.

This is the first instance recorded of what in Sleswick is called 'electioneering geometry', in America 'jerry-mandering'; shuffling the various counties about so as to form an electoral division favourable to the Germans.

The two overwhelmingly Danish counties of Haderslev and Sønderborg form one division, though separated by the county of Aabenraa. The latter, with its fairly considerable German minority, has been joined on to that of Flensburg, where there are few Danish votes; and the strong Danish minority in Tönder County also finds itself without representation in the Reichstag.

In the Prussian Diet, which is returned by a restricted electorate, the Danes are, however, still able to maintain their two members.

The article in the Treaty of Prague (1866) whereby North Sleswick's right of free action received treaty recognition, proved, however, somewhat injurious to the Danish cause. The first representatives sent to Berlin

were Messrs. Krüger and Ahlmann; they refused to take the constitutional oath as members of the Diet, claiming that they only attended to indicate the unsettled position of North Sleswick and to demand the fulfilment of the promise granted them :

We are Danes, we wish to remain Danes, and as Danes we wish to be treated according to the provisions of international law.

This was their one and only election cry.

As time passed and the promise of reunion with Denmark became more and more a dead letter, a somewhat bitter quarrel broke out among the leaders of the movement. 'Oath-refusers' opposed 'oath-takers'; the former were in favour of passive resistance to Prussian aggression; the latter desired the more active policy of taking part in parliamentary discussions in order to press the claims of the Sleswick Danes. Up to the death of Krüger (1881) the party of passive resistance prevailed—a circumstance which, as the event proved, was detrimental to the interests of the Danish population.

The North Sleswickers had discovered that the promise made at Prague was as worthless as that other promise, to respect all legitimate national characteristics, which King William of Prussia had given when he annexed the Duchy. Between 1864 and 1870 many a young Dane asked the question why he should be obliged to swear allegiance to the Prussian King and to serve in the Prussian Army, if the promise of a referendum was honestly meant. The Treaty of Vienna had granted the population the right of choosing, within that period, between Prussian and Danish nationality. Each individual should have been allowed to make, if he so wished, a public declaration that he desired to

remain a subject of Denmark. Before 1870 the Sleswick Danes had actually the right of settling in Denmark. The outbreak of the Franco-German War caused about 8,000 men of military age to leave their old home. According to one authority, nearly 40,000 of the Sleswick Danes had become 'optants'—that is, had taken the 'option' of Danish nationality—or had emigrated, by the end of 1880. As Prussia objected to these 'optants' returning to their original home after a short residence in Denmark, a conference was held in 1872 between the two Governments. The result was that most of the 'optants' were allowed by the Prussian authorities to return and remain unmolested, provided that they gave no well-founded cause for complaint, and did not display a hostile spirit towards Prussia.

Thus a final settlement had been made of the question of the 'optants'. They were liable to be expelled at any moment as 'objectionable' characters. To have allowed them to become naturalized would have meant an increase in the majority of Danish electors; and therefore these North Sleswickers who had returned found themselves political outcasts in their own country; and they were debarred from all social intercourse with their friends and relatives if such intercourse was thought to have the slightest political tinge. They were treated as scapegoats by the Prussian authorities, whenever an election resulted unfavourably for the Government. The Danish voters, however, refused to be influenced by the peril to which their 'optant' relatives and neighbours were exposed.

At the elections for the Reichstag in 1886 North Sleswick gained a new leader in Gustav Johannsen, a skilful politician who enjoyed great personal popularity, not only among his fellow countrymen but also

in parliamentary circles at Berlin. He inspired new life and heart into the movement as no leader before him had done. Early in this period the younger generation, who had passed unscathed through the ordeal of Prussian schools and Prussian military service, made their influence felt. The emigrations had ceased; the gaps in the ranks of the opposition were filled up; and a network of patriotic associations was formed all over North Sleswick. There was an association of voters which took in hand the work of political organization. There was a language society which founded Danish libraries in every province. A school society undertook to pay the fees of indigent North Sleswick children at the Danish 'High Schools'. Then there were lecture societies, whose lecturers were of necessity drawn from the North Sleswick district; temperance societies and young men's associations were founded; other societies concerned themselves with agriculture, and the Danish co-operative movement and the Danish dairy industry found their way into Sleswick. Last but not least there was a society to save the land from being bought up by the Prussian Government for the use of German farmers and small-holders. When the number of German church-services increased—any petition for German services from a few German newcomers in a Danish parish has always found a favourable answer—the Danes replied by founding Free Church communities with separate places of worship. These societies are not allowed to use any public assembly room or country inn; but they have erected more than fifty meeting-halls in North Sleswick.

The influence of the Danish local press has been a source of strength to the nationalist opposition. Four daily papers are published in North Sleswick;

of these the most important are the *Flensborg Avis* and the *Heimdal* of Aabenraa. The editors of both these organs have been conspicuous as leaders of the nationalist movement. J. Jessen, the intrepid editor of the *Flensborg Avis*, succeeded Johannsen as the leader of the North Sleswick party in the Reichstag (1901); but his career was cut short in 1906 by his untimely death, which was doubtless due to the long and frequent terms of imprisonment (amounting in all to four years) that he incurred for 'press offences'. He has been succeeded in the leadership by H. P. Hanssen, the editor of the *Heimdal*, who has shown himself an apt pupil of Gustav Johannsen.

Without such leaders, and such varied methods of opposing German pressure, the people of North Sleswick could hardly have held their own in the era of oppression which began in 1888, a few months after the accession of the present Kaiser. His Christmas gift in that year to his Danish subjects was the practical exclusion of the Danish language from the schools; the children were only allowed to use their native tongue in future during the four hours a week which were provided by the time-table for religious instruction. Many of the clergy, even of the German clergy, protested against this regulation and petitioned that at least two hours a week should be devoted to instruction in Danish, the only language which many of the children understood. But the protest and the petition were unavailing. All private schools and private tuition had long ago been prohibited. Since 1888 attendance at the public secondary schools has been made compulsory. The books used in these schools—they are written expressly for North Sleswick—are full of the most contemptuous references to Denmark and everything Danish. It goes

without saying that they give a most distorted version of the history of Denmark and of Sleswick. 'If the children do not understand German, they must be treated and taught like deaf-mutes'; such is the rule that has been prescribed by a Prussian educational authority.

Any lingering hopes of a more liberal system, to say nothing of a fulfilment of the promises of 1866, soon disappeared under the rule of the new Kaiser. Nothing could be blunter than the speech, delivered at Frankfort-on-Oder two months after his accession, in which he declared that he would see eighteen army-corps and forty-two million inhabitants dead on the battle-field rather than surrender a single stone of what Germany had conquered. Of the same significance was the inspired remark in the *Cologne Gazette* that the separation of Sleswick from Germany could only be imagined as happening after a war disastrous to Germany. The Pan-German movement found a fertile field for its operations among the North Sleswickers.

A new governor-general, Von Köller, was imported from Alsace-Lorraine in 1898. A more 'active' and less scrupulous host of new officials willingly executed the Draconian instructions which he issued in the five years of his governorship. About a thousand expulsions were carried out, without the slightest attempt to prove that the victims had broken Prussian laws and regulations. Many a man who had been born and bred in Sleswick suddenly found himself subjected to the disabilities of an 'optant'. Danish farm-hands were expelled, as a means of putting pressure upon their employers, or were ordered to seek employment with 'loyal' farmers. The campaign was even extended to cover the children of 'optants', who, in accordance

with a regulation of 1883, had been entered on the conscription lists and had been enrolled at the age of twenty. Now, when such children applied for papers of naturalization, they met with a curt refusal and were no longer required as conscripts. They were not Danish citizens, and yet they were not allowed to become citizens of Prussia. Some of the local officials tried to deprive parents of any control over the upbringing of their children. In one case a German chimney-sweep was made the guardian of a widow's children ; but this particular piece of tyranny was disallowed by the Prussian courts of law.

Even in Germany there were some protests against the policy of Von Köller and his subordinates. Professor Hans Delbrück wrote, in the Prussian *Jahrbücher* :

The last expulsions in Sleswick are most revolting . . . But worse than the brutality which makes us the abomination of the civilized world is the infatuation which believes that lasting results can be secured through such measures as these.

In 1899 Gustav Johannsen gained so much support, when he referred to the subject in the Reichstag and the Prussian Diet, that the Government yielded before the protests of enlightened Germans. The ' Köller era ' gradually ebbed out ; the Kaiser paid several friendly visits to the Danish Court ; and the order went forth from Berlin that gentler tactics should be employed. Expulsion orders were reduced to normal proportions, and most of the children of the ' optants ' were admitted to the full rights of Prussian citizenship. The only ' homeless ' people who are now to be found in Sleswick are the children, born before 1898, of Danish immigrants into the Duchy.

Every election since 1890 has proved that the

population of North Sleswick is increasingly conscious of its Danish nationality. The elections of 1912 for the Reichstag showed an increase of about 2,000 in the Danish vote ; and this in spite of the coercive measures employed by an ever-growing number of German officials, who compelled every functionary and many of the small tradesmen to vote as directed. In the Haderslev-Sönderborg district, the stronghold of the Danish influence, there were 11,736 Danish votes as against 5,340 polled by the Germans and the Socialists together. In the Aabenraa-Flensburg and Tönder-Husum divisions there were slight increases in the Danish minority. The elections of 1913 for the Prussian Diet showed an even more marked progress, especially in the southern districts of North Sleswick. In the Aabenraa division the Danish candidate was returned with a safe majority. In the towns many of the German inhabitants refused to vote for the German candidate, who was a local official, in order to show their disapproval of the treatment of their Danish neighbours by the police. The results of this election were a subject for rejoicings both in Sleswick and in Denmark ; the election was regarded as a trial of strength because it occurred just before the fiftieth anniversary of the separation of the Duchy from the mother-country. Many young Sleswickers, whose parents had supported the 'Schleswig-Holstein' movement and the Prussian candidates, had now joined the camp of their Danish fellow countrymen. It was hoped that, in course of time, all the 16,000 Danish-speaking inhabitants of central Sleswick might follow the example. The present war has for the moment postponed the fulfilment of such hopes.

No less than 15,000 North Sleswickers of military age

have loyally obeyed the Prussian call to arms. Whether living abroad or in the country, they made no attempt to evade the stern duty which was imposed upon them of fighting against their natural friends on behalf of their natural enemies. While the mobilization was in progress, this loyalty was rewarded by the arrest of all the prominent Danes, both men and women, in North Sleswick. The intention of the Prussian authorities was to strike terror into those who remained at home.

North of the river Eider, the old frontier between Denmark and Germany, there stands beside the parish church an elder-tree, about which there is a local prophecy that, when it is large enough for a horse to be tethered to it, then the King of Denmark shall keep tryst here with the King of the Germans, a man with a withered arm; and then the frontier line shall be fixed in peace and amity. The elder-tree has long since reached the girth demanded by the prophecy.

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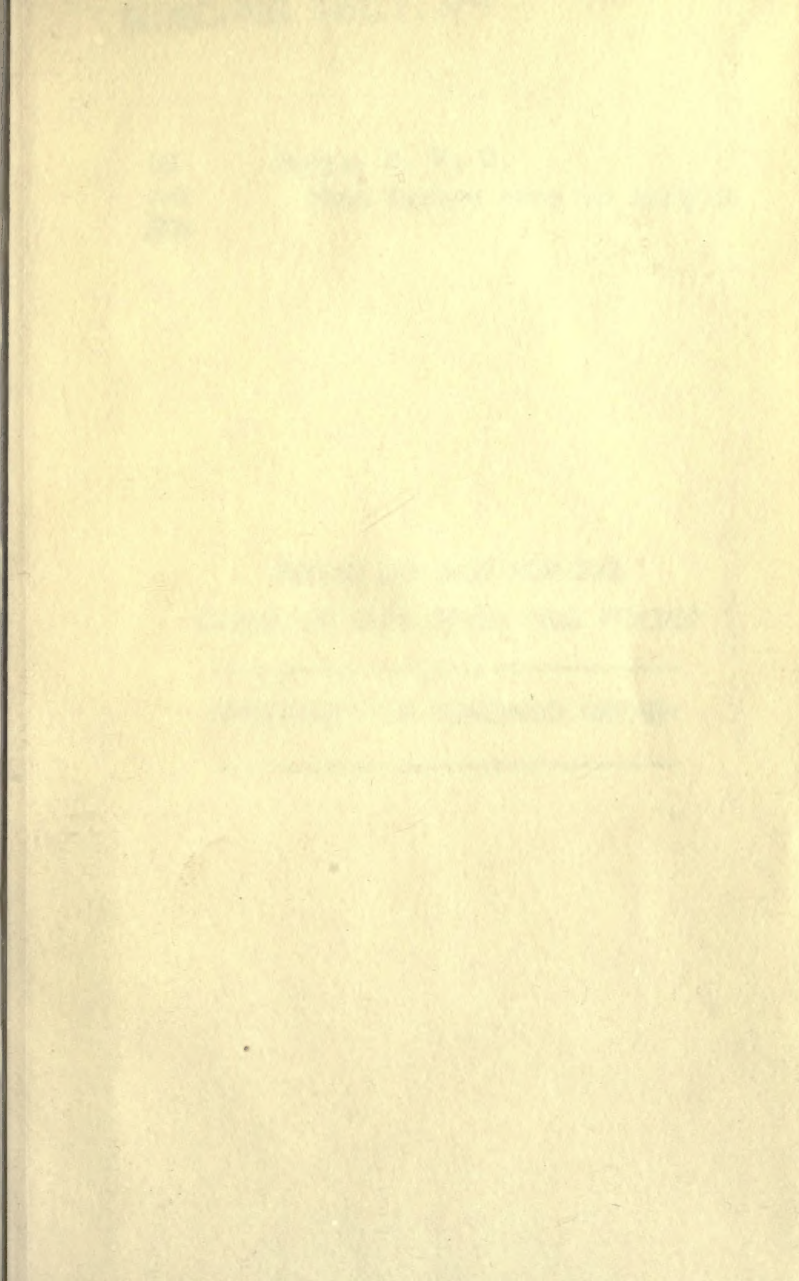
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